1972 COMIC ART CONVENTION

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1972

JULY 1 THRU JULY 5, 1972

AT THE

STATLER - HILTON HOTEL

33RD ST. & 7TH AVE.

NEW YORK CITY

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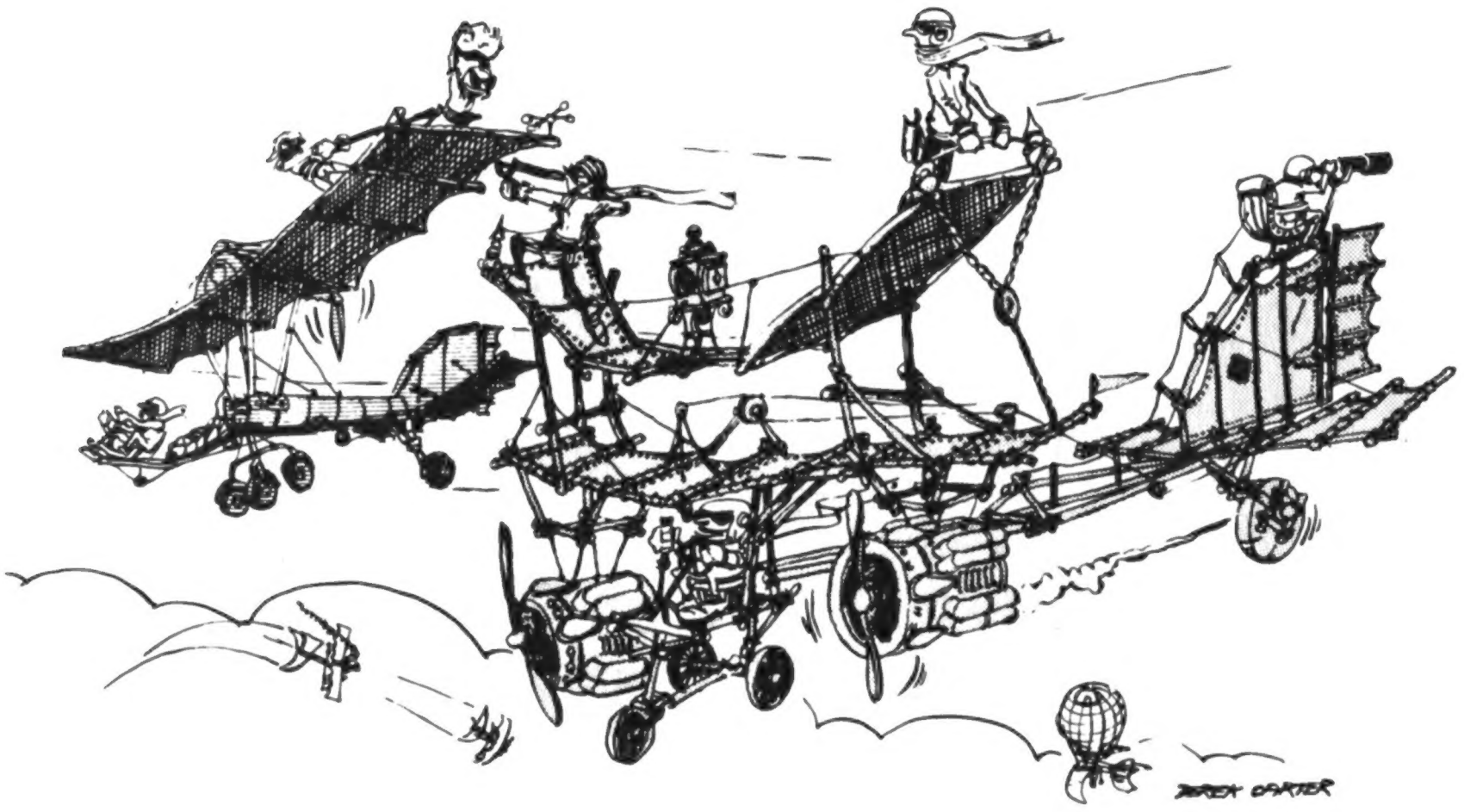
STAFF



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VAMPIRELLA Cover © 1972 WARREN Publishing Co.

Cover Art by Jose Gonzalez

Consult the separate POCKET PROGRAM for a detailed listing of the programmed events of the convention.

Convention Logo by James Steranko

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DC

WINNER OF 9
ACBA AWARDS

SALUTES THE '72

comic art convention

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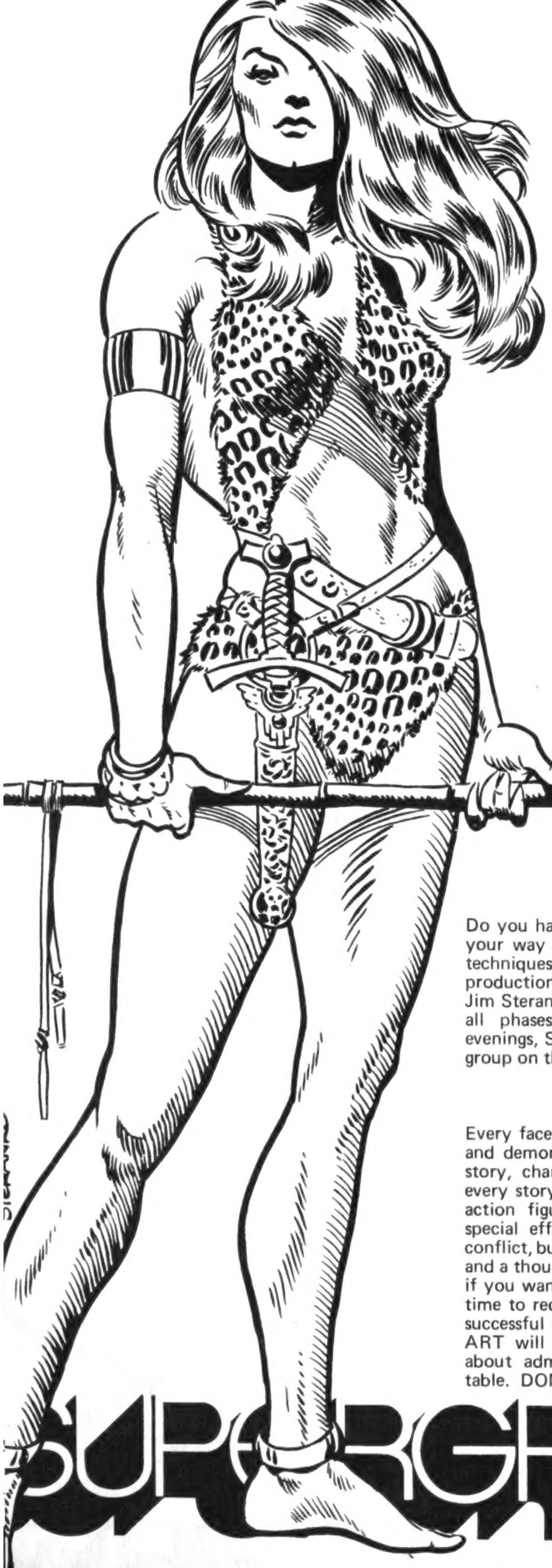

HISTORY OF COMICS VOLUME 2 NOW ON SALE!

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SYMPOSIUM OF COMIC ART

Do you have plans to write or draw for the comics, but find your way blocked by a wall of unanswered questions about techniques, tools, materials, and other aspects of comic production? Then here is the answer: comic artist and writer, Jim Steranko, is teaching a course during the convention on all phases of comic art production. On three separate evenings, Steranko will give personal instruction to a limited group on the following subjects:

- WRITING FOR THE COMICS
- DRAWING FOR THE COMICS
- STORYTELLING IN THE COMICS

Every facet of the subject matter will be carefully explained and demonstrated by Steranko: how to plot and develop a story, characterization, dialogue, gimmicks, three elements every story must have, what tools to use, drawing heads and action figures, creating costumes and fantastic weaponry, special effects, how to tell a story in pictures, pyramiding conflict, building suspense, how and where to sell your work--and a thousand other important details you will need to know if you want to be in comics. This is the opportunity of a lifetime to receive individual instruction by one of comic's most successful and imitated pro's. THE SYMPOSIUM OF COMIC ART will have a very limited attendance, so inquire early about admission fees from Steranko at the Supergraphics table. DON'T MISS IT!

SUPERGRAPHICS

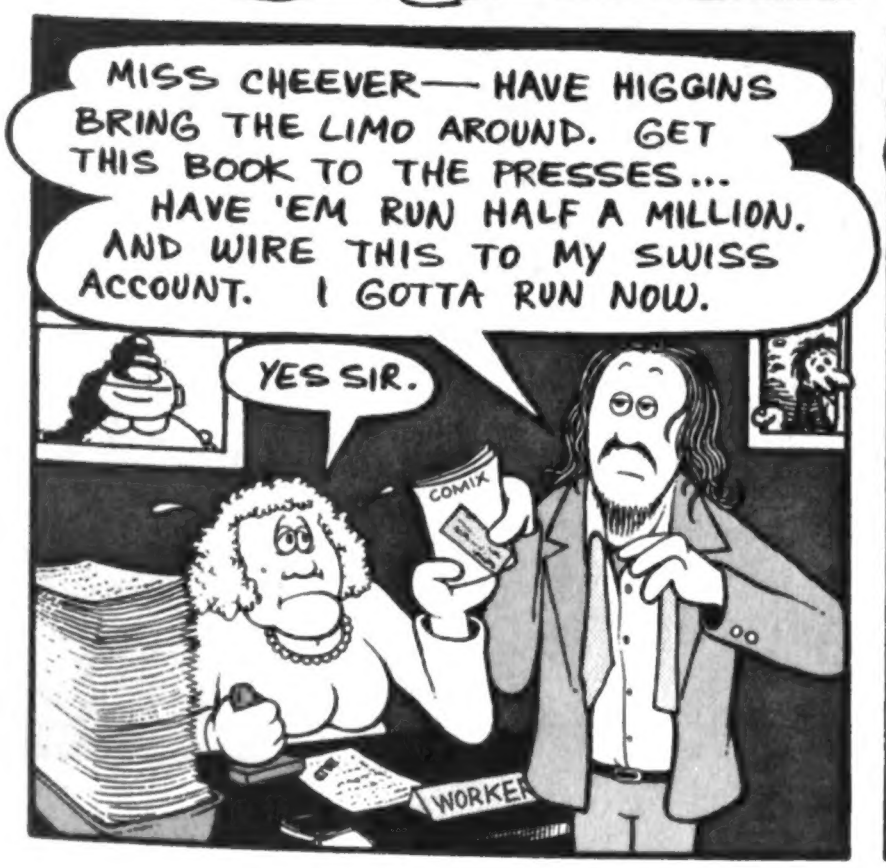
Let's Be Honest

YOU MAY THINK THAT BEING THE HEAD OF AN UNDERGROUND PUBLISHING COMPANY IS A LOT OF FUN. WELL, LEMME TELL YA... IT'S NOT!
MICKEY RAT
RING
THE BOSS

IT'S A SUPREME HASSLE IS WHAT IT IS... EXCUSE ME.
RING
...HELLO. HEF? HOWYA DOIN' BABY? TONIGHT? ... LISTEN, WHY DONCHA COME HERE? SURE! ... AND BRING A LOTTA GIRLS. YEAH... LATER!

LIKE I WAS SAYING... IT AIN'T A BARREL OF MONKEYS. FOR INSTANCE— I HAVE TO SLIP OUTTA MY COMFORTABLE SUIT INTO THESE BELL BOTTOM JEANS CAUSE SOME CARTOONIST IS COMING IN WITH A NEW UNDER-GROUND COMIC BOOK.
HE'S HERE, MR. KITCHEN.
OOF!

HEY! WHAT'S HAPPENIN' ?!
GOT A NEW BOOK HERE.
GROOVY!
CAN I GET AN ADVANCE?
WELL, TIMES ARE TOUGH... BUT I'LL TELL YA WHAT— HERE'S A TWENTY OUTA MY OWN POCKET.
DENIS, YER A SAINT.
FRED THE DUCK


MISS CHEEVER— HAVE HIGGINS BRING THE LIMO AROUND. GET THIS BOOK TO THE PRESSES... HAVE 'EM RUN HALF A MILLION. AND WIRE THIS TO MY SWISS ACCOUNT. I GOTTA RUN NOW.
YES SIR.
COMIX
WORKER

Little Doug Kenney will go to bed hungry tonight.

. . . unless *you* help. Raised in a small village called by the natives "Ohio," Doug has never had the things that your children have had. He was 10 years old before he owned a pair of Florsheim shoes, he was almost 20 before he had his first ride in a Lincoln Continental, and his parents were too poor to send him to a fancy Swiss private school like his playmates. He has never tasted caviar. . . .

Won't you find it in your heart to join the *National Lampoon* Foster Subscription Program? It costs only pennies a day and can do so much. If you buy a one-year subscription, little Doug Kenney can have a crust of bread and a cup of milk every day. A two-year subscription will send him to school, where he will learn to read, write and play polo. A lifetime subscription will enable him to throw an entire coming-out party for his less fortunate friends in the south of France.

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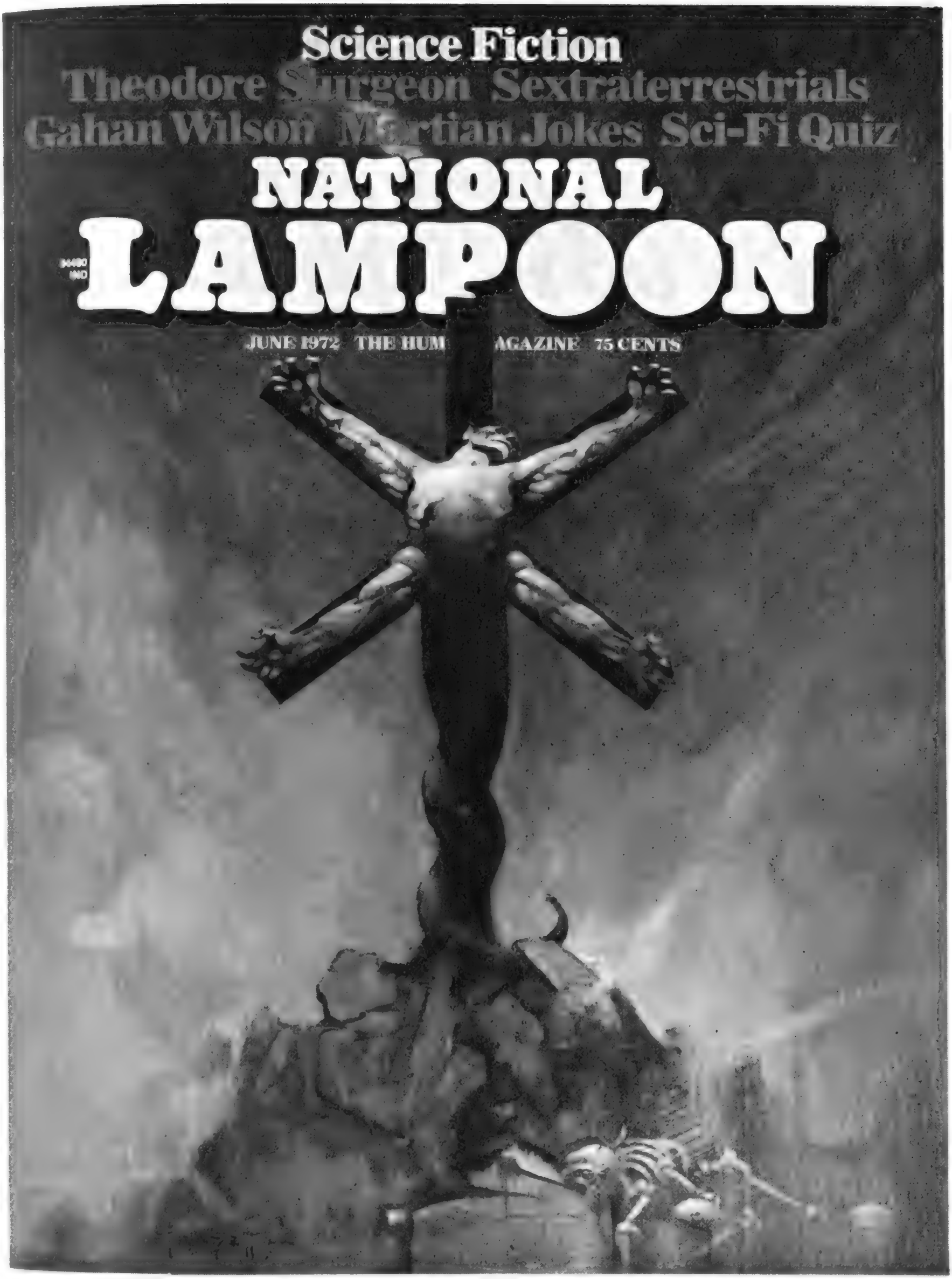
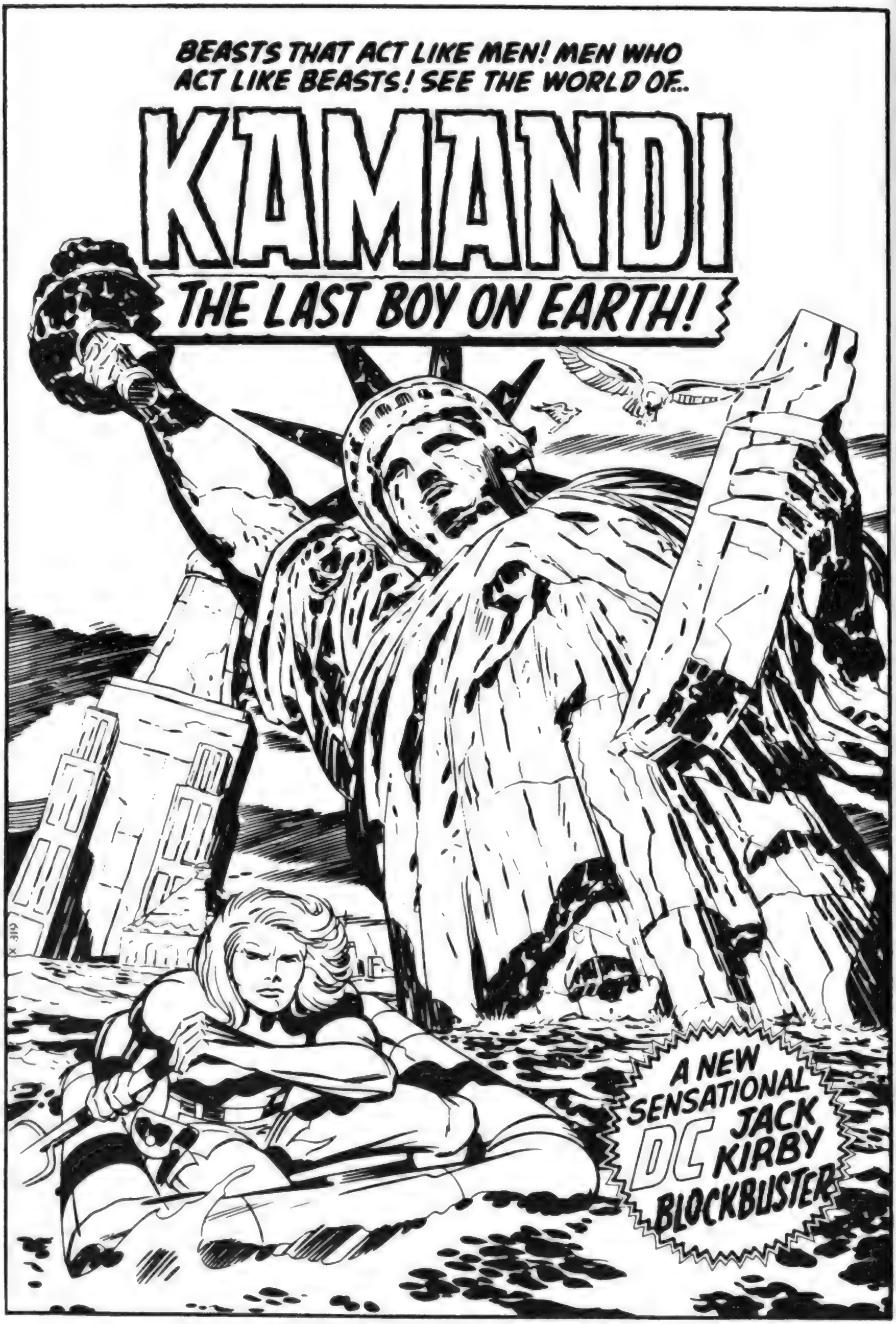
Science Fiction
Theodore Sturgeon Sextraterrestrials
Gahan Wilson Martian Jokes Sci-Fi Quiz

NATIONAL LAMPOON

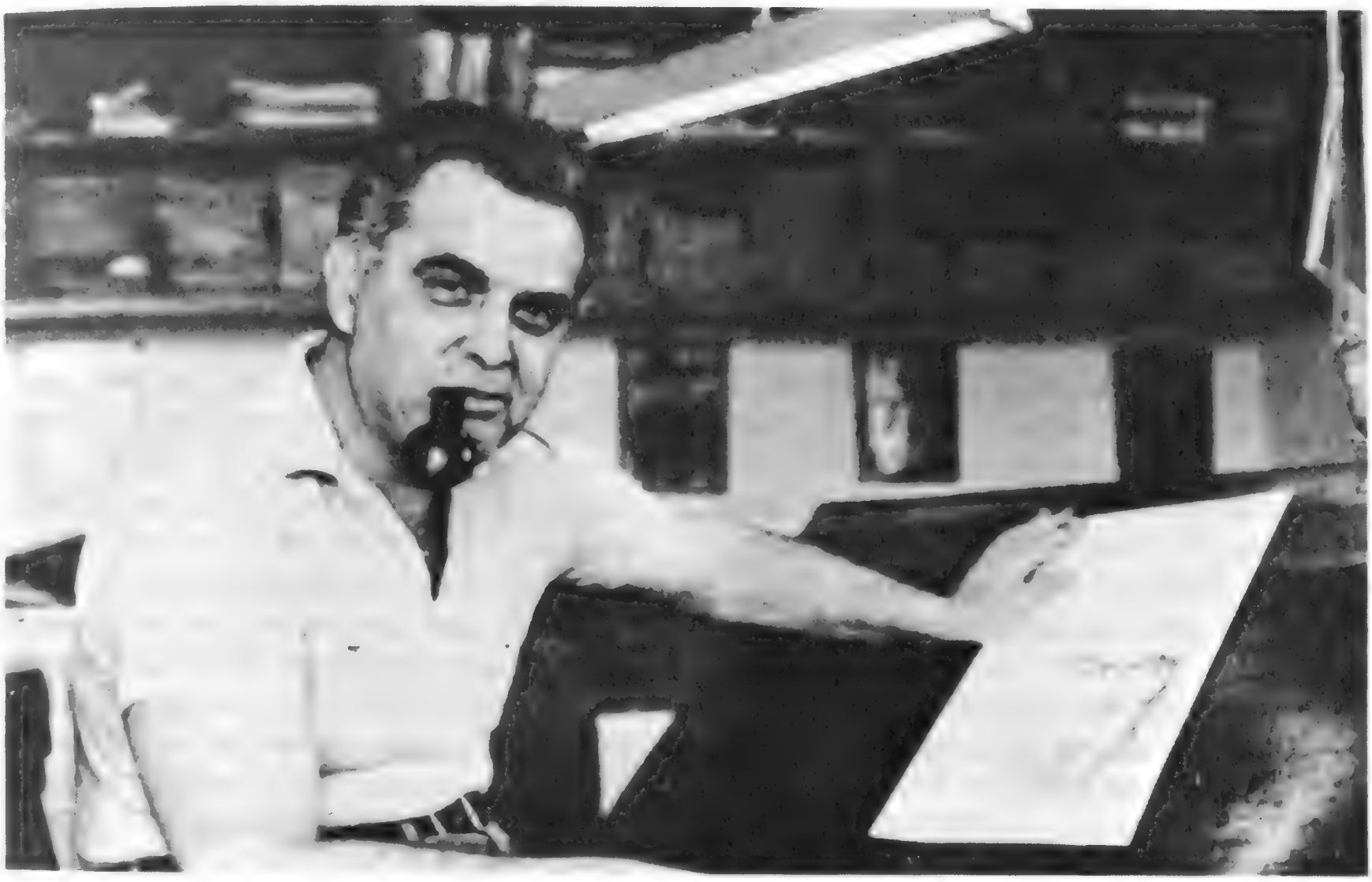
JUNE 1972 THE HUM AGAZINE 75 CENTS




BEASTS THAT ACT LIKE MEN! MEN WHO ACT LIKE BEASTS! SEE THE WORLD OF..
KAMANDI
THE LAST BOY ON EARTH!
A NEW SENSATIONAL DC JACK KIRBY BLOCKBUSTER

Voyager

Jack



Consider Jack Kirby—the supreme malcontent, the personification of the American Dream, the ultimate voyager. . .

His life should have been a movie—one of those Horatio Alger-ish flicks the studios churned out in the forties, usually starring John Garfield. You know the kind: there's this bright, sensitive youngster living in a ratty slum, and while his contemporaries are out oogling women, breaking windows and maybe pulling heists, he's closeted somewhere, doing his thing. He's determined to. . .well, *make* something of himself. To lift himself and his family from the welter of tenements and garbage. To *become*. Garfield usually had lines like, "I'm gonna *beat* this town. I swear —I'm gonna *win*!"

In the films—which were often quite good folk art, with a genuine basis in the American experience—the guy went on through hardships and heartbreak to finally stand on the stage of Carnegie Hall before a mob of silky, bejeweled swells, bowing, grinning shyly at the misty-eyed girl in the wings, his sweetheart, the one who Believed In Him (Ann Sheridan?).

To the best of my knowledge, Jack has never sweltered in the Carnegie spotlight. Nor is he the darling of the society-page set

(except, possibly, the comics-reading segment thereof.) But he *does* have a fiercely loyal audience, which includes virtually everyone who cares about visual storytelling and can recognize superlative examples of it, everyone who cherishes the creative imagination and, lately, a few academic types able to realize that the United States has produced more "art" in its comics than in most of its novels. And Jack has succeeded–splendidly!–in lifting himself out of the slum, out of this world and, finally, out of this universe entirely. . .

Most of you know the Kirby story. For those of you new to comics lore, let's review the scenario:

He was born Jack Kurtzberg on August 28, 1917, in Manhattan's Lower East Side. At the time, it was a Jewish ghetto; now, it is a black and Puerto Rican ghetto. It hasn't changed much these past 55 years; it is, and was, noisy, filthy, crowded–a place to escape from. Jack began his escape at age 14, with a series of gag cartoons he submitted to every market he could find, from the *New Yorker* to obscure trade publications. He didn't make many sales, but he got much encouragement. Even the crustiest editors recognized the talent the lad obviously had.

By his eighteenth birthday, Jack was working at the Max Fleisher studios, helping animate the screen doings of Betty Boop and Popeye. From the Fleisher shop, he moved to the Lincoln Newspaper Syndicate, where he did a little bit of everything–gags, strips and political cartoons. Looking at the Lincoln pieces now, you can see an artist becoming an Artist. The styles are many, ranging from the antique etching effect of **The Black Buccaneer** to the breezy simplicity of **Abdul Jones.** Jack was experimenting, groping, growing–seeking the precise means of expressing his view of the world and the human condition.

For the next several years, Jack worked primarily in the newspaper strip form, under a whole lexicon of names. As Bob Brown, he did **"Cyclone" Burke**, a hardboiled science fiction saga; as Lance Kirby, he drew a western, **The Lone Rider**; and as Curt Davis, he returned to s-f with **The Diary of Dr. Hayward.**

© 1972 NPP, Inc.

Around 1940, Jack began drawing two superhero strips for the Fox Syndicate, **The Blue Beetle** (very little relation to the same title published by Charlton in the mid-60's) and **Blue Bolt.** Although nobody could realize it, those strips were important to our medium, because they introduced Jack to the kind of character he would eventually perfect –the larger-than-life myth figure whose ancestors were Homer's Achilles and Odysseus, whose adventures were abstracted from the turmoil of the Twentieth Century. And they led Jack to the format he would find most congenial–the familiar comic *book* rectangle. Pleased with the Blues–Bolt and Beetle–Fox's moguls asked Jack to develop some ideas for a line of comics magazines the company was initiating. He did, writing and drawing a number of features, including superheroes.

Then Jack went to another fledgling publisher, Fawcett. There, collaborating with Joe Simon, he illustrated the first Captain Marvel yarn. Yes, that's right–**Captain Marvel**, the old Shazam-sayer himself.

So far, so good. At the beginning of the 40's, Kirby was one of several bright, talented young artists willing to sacrifice money and respectability to do work they loved, men like Will Eisner, Bill Everett, Joe Schuster, Jack Cole. His stuff was already excellent, but not until he accepted an assignment with Timely Comics did Jack Blossom. With Joe Simon, he created a hero perfectly suited to the fantasies of a nation suddenly caught in the horrors of the worst war ever: Captain America.

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Cap was an instant success. Small wonder. He was an amalgam of cowboy, private eye, patriot, and the cheery soldier of the recruiting posters. He was brave, loyal, incorruptible, tough—exactly the sort of chap we were depending on to keep Nazi tanks from the streets of Dubuque. He was the country's noblest concept of itself plunked down on pulp pages, in full color. And—he *moved!* For Jack had discovered a profound secret; like the fine-arts crowd, he had learned that *truth* can sometimes best be served by distorting *reality*. Look at Cap: observe the stark, sweeping lines, the subtle distortions of virtually every part of the human anatomy, the dynamic compositions, the juxtaposition of foreground and background elements. Notice how your eye is pulled from panel to panel. See how the dialogue balloons and captions are placed to read logically without interfering with the picture. The feeling is one of motion, violence—a maelstrom. It is not *real*, but in terms of the medium, it is awfully *true*.

It is also, undeniably, Art, and you can expect doctoral theses to be written about it. Soon.

The voyage begun by Jack Kurtzberg in an east side tenement had reached its first port-of-call. He'd left mundane reality.

While we're scrambling metaphors, let's return to Kirby-as-Garfield. The movie speeds up. Montage: Garfield-Kirby meets Ann Sheridan playing a pretty girl, Rosalind. Wedding bells. Handfuls of rice tossed at the laughing couple. Cut to: Kirby at the recruiting center, being drafted. Fade to: Kirby on the battlefield at Metz. Cut to: Kirby in an army hospital, his feet swathed in bandages, a sketch pad on his lap. Cut to: Kirby on a parade ground, receiving two battle stars. Cut to: Rosalind welcoming Jack home, at the end of a long, ugly interlude in his voyage. . .

. . .and slow dissolve to Jack at the drawing board.

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For eight years, he refined the techniques he'd developed in **Captain America,** doing romances, westerns, supernaturals, crime–and superheroes. Then, in 1952, a bucolic shrink impressively known as *Dr.* Frederic Wertham seduced millions of parents and some congressional committees into believing that comics were seducing the innocent. Uh huh. Sure. A business–hell, an *art form*–that had been vaguely disreputable was abruptly disgraceful, and the for-rent signs were slapped across the doors of nearly 40 comics companies, and hundreds of good men and true were scanning the want-ads. Jack wasn't among them; he got such comic book work as was still available–maybe enough to pay the bills–but editors were scared, cowering in the shadow of the Eisenhower era witch hunters, and the medium was approximately as exciting as subway graffiti. Quality? Creativity? –Forget it. Jack must have felt like he'd passed through a fun house entrance to find himself, inexplicably, on an extremely arid desert island. Nonetheless, he survived, he functioned, and his 50's efforts on **Green Arrow, Challengers of the Unknown, Boy's Ranch, The Fly, Bullseye** and **The Double Life of Private Strong,** among others, are worth looking at. Worth *more* than just a look–worth a good, solid *study*, is a syndicated strip he did with Wallace Wood, **Sky Masters.** It was, again, science fiction: the sort John Campbell popularized in **Astounding**: an extrapolation of technological advances, a believable guess at the hows and whens of space travel. Jack and Woody share a fascination for sexy hardware and awe at the immense distances between the planets and, consequently, they collaborated beautifully in **Sky Masters.** Legal hassles forced them to retire Sky after two years, a cause for mourning.

However: Sky had taken Jack off the Earth, and directed him toward the vastnesses. The strip alloyed his taste for science-fantasy, displayed earlier in *"Cyclone"* Burke and Doc Hayward's diaries, with the **Captain America** techniques. Mark *phase two* of the voyage complete.

Phase three of the voyage began as that crippled albatross of history, the 50's, was dying. Jack was doing the odd job or so for his old employer, Timely, rechristened the

Marvel Comics Group. Nothing spectacular: westerns like the Kids, Rawhide and Two-Gun, and monster yarns derived from Hollywood's lesser achievements. As the decade turned, the public began displaying a small interest in superheroes once more–the "camp" craze was showing on the cultural horizon, like the Indian raiding party in a John Ford flick–and National had already resurrected *The Flash*, and was refurbishing similar heroes in its showcase magazines. So Jack and editor-writer Stan Lee decided to try superheroes–with a *difference*. With no foofaraw whatever, they released **Fantastic Four** #1. From the fans, a big yawn. Until the fourth issue. Then–**Captain America** revisited. Overwhelming acceptance. Lee's excellent scripting, combined with Jack's draftsmanship and storytelling, gave the FF a stunning sophistication and individuality. There were all the Kirby hallmarks–action, movement–plus a *believability*; readers *knew* these people. They weren't merely justice's champions and mad-scientist fighters and so forth; they were friends, with distinct personalities and problems. As **Captain America** inaugurated fresh drafting methods, so did the FF inaugurate an unheard-of emphasis on characterization and story complexity.

Listen to Stan Lee describing the collaboration: *"Some artists, such as Jack Kirby, need no plot at all. I mean, I'll say to Jack, 'Let's let the next villain be Doctor Doom.' Or I may not even say that. He may tell me. He just about makes up the plots for these stories. All I do is a little editing."*

In the following years, Lee and Jack continued to blend wild fantasy with psychological versimilitude, and the results read like an honor roll: **The Incredible Hulk, Ant-Man, The Human Torch, The Thing, Sergeant Fury, The X-Men, The Silver Surfer, The Inhumans,** and perhaps their greatest mutual effort, **The Mighty Thor.**

It was **Thor**, I think, who started Jack on the fourth leg of his voyage. To realize his version of the Norse god's exploits, Jack had to locate a special realm of the imagination, where legend and fact, the possible and the fantastic, the probable and the unlikely could merge and be one. Where Asgard and New York City have equal weight and substance. Where the distant past and the unimaginable future co-exist in a single, finely wrought moment.

He *did* locate that realm, and has been exploring it ever since, most recently in the titles he writes, edits and draws for National: **The Forever People, Mister Miracle, The New Gods** and the forthcoming **Demon.**

As I type this, reviewing Jack's career, I recall the movie analogy. Only I no longer visualize Jack Kirby on the stage of Carnegie Hall. No: Carnegie is too constricting. He stands, instead, at the far edge of the Milky Way, on a platform fashioned from the hearts of stars, and the audience—eerie beings no one save Jack himself can see—are pounding comets together in tribute. Jack smiles, bows, glances at Rosalind, and—

Wait! He's gazing into the distance. His brow creases; his expression grows thoughtful. And he's moving, voyaging. . .

Go, Jack. And carry us along.

Denny O'Neil

THE
Jack Kirby
EXHIBIT

at the
1972 N.Y.
COMIC ART
CONVENTION

COMMUNICATORS unlimited

THE DEMON
INTRODUCING--
JACK KIRBY'S
STARTLING
NEW EPIC--
"The ORIGIN of THE DEMON!"

GOOD GRIEF, ALTRON-BOY, WHAT IS IT ?!!
WHY,... IT...IT'S
COMICON '72!
BEST WISHES
LARRY

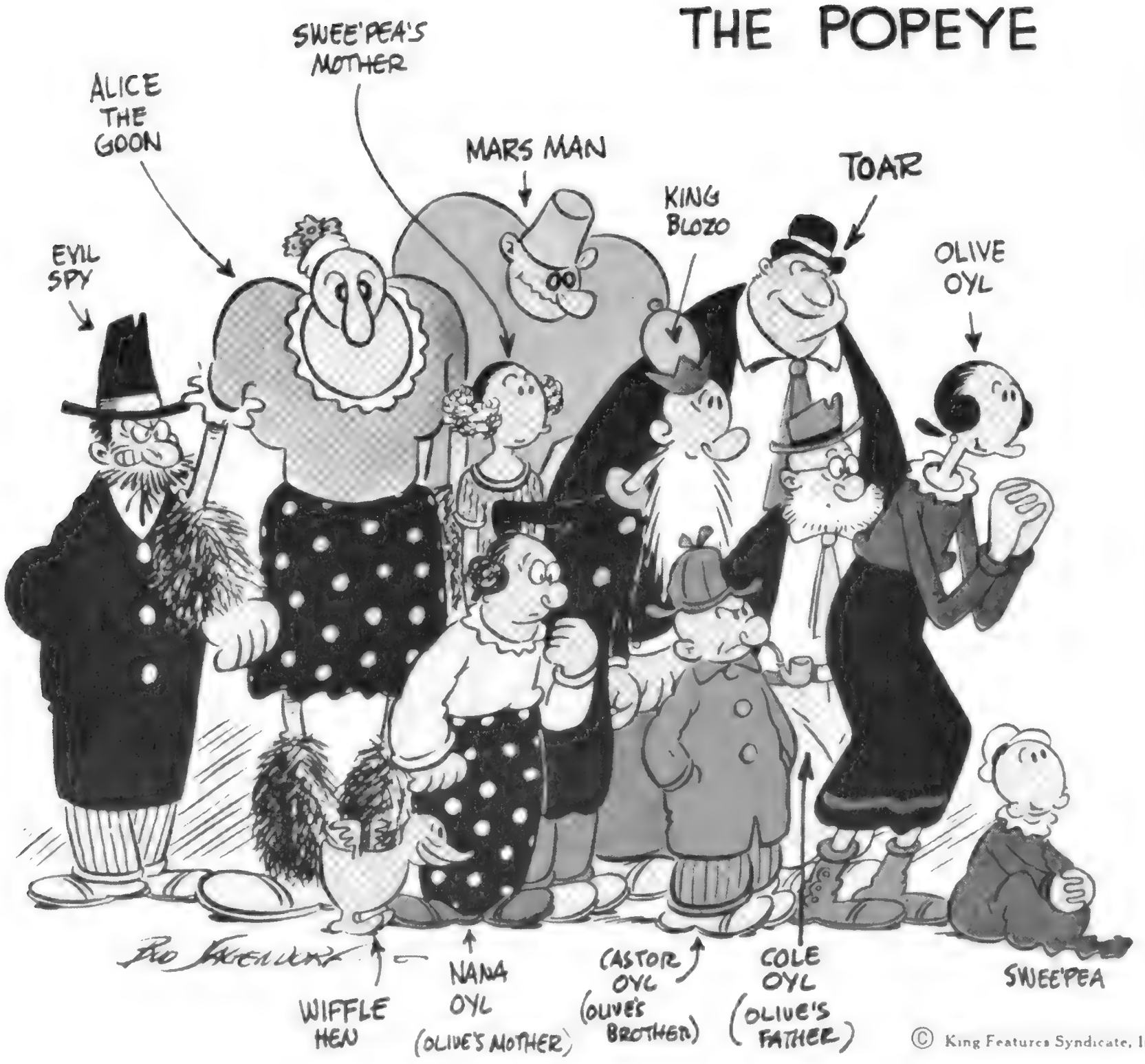
It wasn't *only* MAGIC that put this Program Book together!

PHASE PUBLICATIONS

Sal Quartuccio • Jim Ciccolella • Doug Foley

Best Wishes from ADAM STRANGE & MURPHY ANDERSON

THE POPEYE



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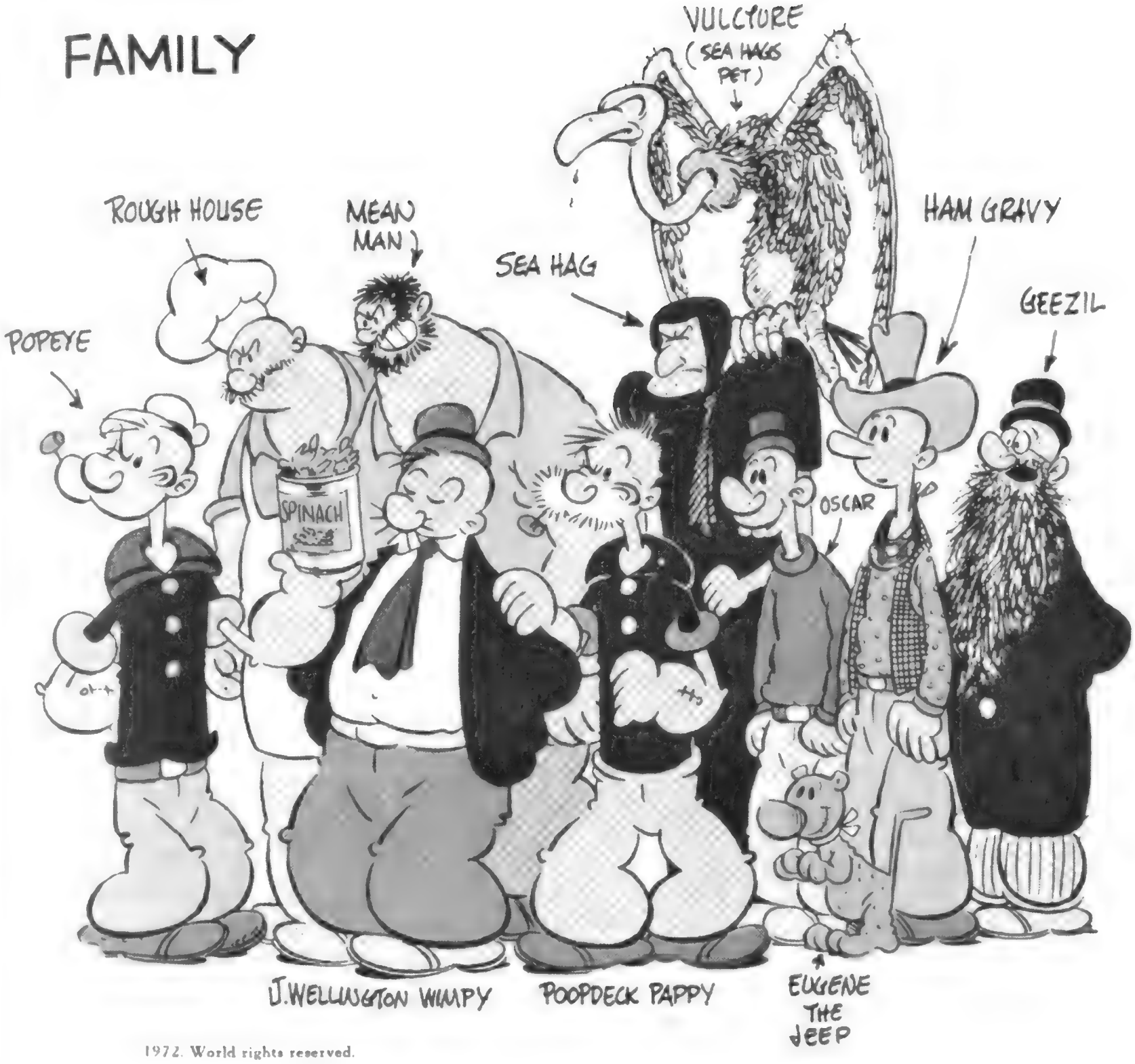
FAMILY



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GUEST OF HONOR

Bud Sagendorf

A favorite gambit of fiction is to have a character desperately unhappy in his work and pining for a more exciting position, but not so Bud Sagendorf, who does the POPEYE cartoon.

"I love my work and comic strips," he says. "Sometimes I feel sorry for the people who only get to read comic strips . . . it's a lot more fun getting to write and draw them."

He should know. He has spent a number of years doing both. He says that he started drawing at an early age, "because it was easier to make pictures than to learn to spell."

That may be, but some years later he had obviously mastered the mystery of spelling since he was assistant comic art director in charge of production at King Features Syndicate, a job demanding a wary eye for the spelling vagaries of comic artists.

But that was a number of years after his birth in Wenatchee, Wash. At the age of three, the family moved to Santa Monica, Calif., where he was reared by a "loving mother and an adoring sister."

While still in high school, he went to work for the late E.C. Segar, creator of POPEYE. He couldn't have found a better teacher, as Segar was a master of the humorous continuity strip.

"While working for him," Sagendorf fondly recalls, "I had the fun of going through the labor pains of the birth of many wonderful characters such as Swee'pea, Eugene the Jeep, Alice the Goon and Poopdeck-Pappy."

After Segar's death in 1938, Bud was called east by King Features to continue work on the strip. After a while he was lured from the ink pots to take a desk job as the aforementioned assistant comic editor.

He did the job conscientiously, but when King decided to do a Popeye comic magazine, he got back behind the drawing board and undertook to write and draw the whole thing. In 1959, he again took over the daily and Sunday Popeye strip.

In 1950 Bud became a member of the faculty of the Famous Artists School in Westport, Conn., and five years and hundreds of cartoons later, came up with the school's basic course in cartooning which even now is being followed by hundreds of embryonic cartoonists.

Bud is married to his high school sweetheart, Nadia. Bud says, "I spoiled a great fashion artist, but she says she loves being a housewife and mother."

They have three children – Martin, a physicist, married to a clever artist. Daughter Nicki, is married to a lawyer . . . she's also an artist, and according to Bud, "a living doll." The youngest son, Bradley, is a radar technician, antique dealer and the creative genius of the family. All of the family live in Connecticut.

...POP EYE

Among Bud's hobbies is the creation of toys and games, most of which are connected with his cartoon characters. He also claims he is rapidly becoming an average bowler. He collects and restores antique phonographs and talking machines.

"If I hadn't been born a coward," he comments, philosophically, "I would like to own and drive a real racing car."

Popeye the Sailor, whose more than $10,000,000 earnings from TV make him the richest cartoon in the medium, got his start long before the TV era. He made his debut on January 17, 1929, in a King Features comic strip . . . titled "The Thimble Theatre."

Popeye was brought into the strip as an incidental character, just for one story. It was on the same basis that he went into animated cartoons two years later.

But the spunky one-eyed sailor went on to become star of the comic strip, star of the theatrical cartoons, star of radio and now star of TV . . . undoubtedly one of the great cartoon stars of all time.

There are a few current cartoon characters who pre-date even Popeye. But there's none that have had the circulation of Popeye. And there's certainly none that have been in animated cartoons so much and so long . . . or even come close.

A total of 454 Popeye cartoons were produced over the course of 32 years.

In today's money minded world, the question inevitably arises, how much has the muscular little sailor earned? It's not easy to estimate. But it's a safe guess that in newspapers, theaters, and TV combined, Popeye has grossed over $50,000,000. In addition, an estimated $100,000,000 in Popeye toys, novelties and other merchandise has been sold at retail.

Popeye was born from the pen of E.C. Segar, the "Thimble Theatre" cartoonist.

Segar was a small-town boy who became a cartoonist by taking the famous Evans correspondence course. While studying he held many jobs, including motion-picture projectionist. As such he ran and watched innumerable Charlie Chaplin comedies.

Segar later said that the Chaplin comedies were one of his principal inspirations. Charlie's conflicts with big burly villains are

reflected to this day in Popeye's problems with the fat, black bearded Brutus.

Segar used to buy all his art supplies from one store near his home in Santa Monica. One day in 1931 he mentioned to the lady in charge of the store that he was looking for a young cartoonist to do some inking for him while he took a brief vacation.

The lady sent around her kid brother, who was still a student at Santa Monica High School, and Segar put him to work. When Segar returned from vacation, he found the lad's work satisfactory and asked him to do more.

The lad's name was Bud Sagendorf, and he remained Segar's assistant until Segar's death seven years later. And today Sagendorf is sole author and artist of Popeye comic strip and comic books for King Features.

Segar and Sagendorf used to spend hours doodling to create new characters for the Popeye comic strip.

One afternoon, on their way to Segar's duck club, they stopped off at a roadside stand, and while the hamburgers sizzled they took out pads and pencils and doodled.

Out of their combined doodles came a big nosed animal that Segar thought he could use. He quickly wrote down "EE" (he favored double vowels), and then by jockeying around consonants came up with the word "JEEP."

The next day Sagendorf was sent to the library to search all the foreign dictionaries for the word "jeep." It checked out as a pure original.

Those were dark days for young Sagendorf. The co-ed at Santa Monica High on whom he had a crush had declared herself engaged to another fellow. What with his after-school job as Segar's assistant, Sagendorf had no time to plead his cause.

When Sagendorf arrived at the studio that afternoon, Segar said they'd have to give a name to the newly created jeep. Sagendorf suggested the name of his girl's fiance, Eugene.

When Eugene the Jeep debuted in print several weeks later, there was hardly anyone at Santa Monica High who didn't realize the origin of the name. And almost everyone who passed the fiance on campus taunted him with the sound of the strange comic-strip creature "jeep, jeep."

The harassment became so intense, that the fiance dropped out of the school and the engagement was broken off. Sagendorf finally married the girl. They still hear occasionally from the original Eugene. He's not mad anymore.

Bud Sagendorf, Popeye's modern-day cartoonist, makes frequent public appearances, at schools, museums and fairs, where he lectures and draws cartoons for the kids.

YA HAS GOT TA STOP FEEDIN' YER LUNCH TA STRAY DORGS AN' CATS! IT IS OKAY TO BE KINDHEARTED, BUT YA HASTA THINK OF YERSELF!
BUT I LIKE AMINALS!

I HAVE HAD A WONDERFUL EVENING AND I INSIST UPON PAYING THE CHECK

OKAY, WIMPY— THANKS— OLIVE AN' ME'LL WALK AHEAD WHILE YOU SETTLES UP

WE'LL SEE YOU LATER

PLEASANT WEATHER, ISN'T IT, WE'RE HAVING ?

MR. POPEYE SAID HE PICKED UP A "FIVE" THAT SLIPPED OUT OF YOUR POCKET— HE TOLD ME TO RETURN IT TO YOU— SHALL I TAKE THE CHECK OUT OF IT?

HUH?! -UH- WHY, YES- YES, OF COURSE

#5

6-27

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-AND THANKS FOR THE LUNCH

GOOD NIGHT, LITTLE WILD-FLOWER OF COW-STREWN PASTURES

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN HE WOULDN'T LEAVE ME IN A HOLE— HE WAS JUST HAVING HIS FUN— GOOD OLD POPEYE— IF I HAD A LAWN-MOWER I'D GLADLY MOW HIS LAWN— IF HE HAD A LAWN

R. Buckler '72

When the Monster every

Times talks... body listens!!!

And that means that things can get pretty crowded at times. One way to avoid the crowds and beat the rush is to get your very own subscription to THE MONSTER TIMES which is, in case you haven't heard, the first multi-media newspaper, and a fun, informative tabloid devoted exclusively to a lighthearted but hardnosed, factual study of the best aspects (and, just for fun, some of the worse) of the 20th Century pop fantasy renaissance, namely films of the monster-horror variety, Sci-Fi, comics, pulps and all like that . . . items of rabid interest to anyone who digs the fantasy field. The format is, in a nutshell, a Monster-sized tabloid featuring original color cover comics and anxiety-provoking centerfolds on sale every two weeks! Fans cannot afford to miss so much as a single issue. Not only will you miss out on the latest horrorific action, but there's a good chance we might even come looking for *you*!

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GUEST OF HONOR

Alex Toth

The Work of Alex Toth

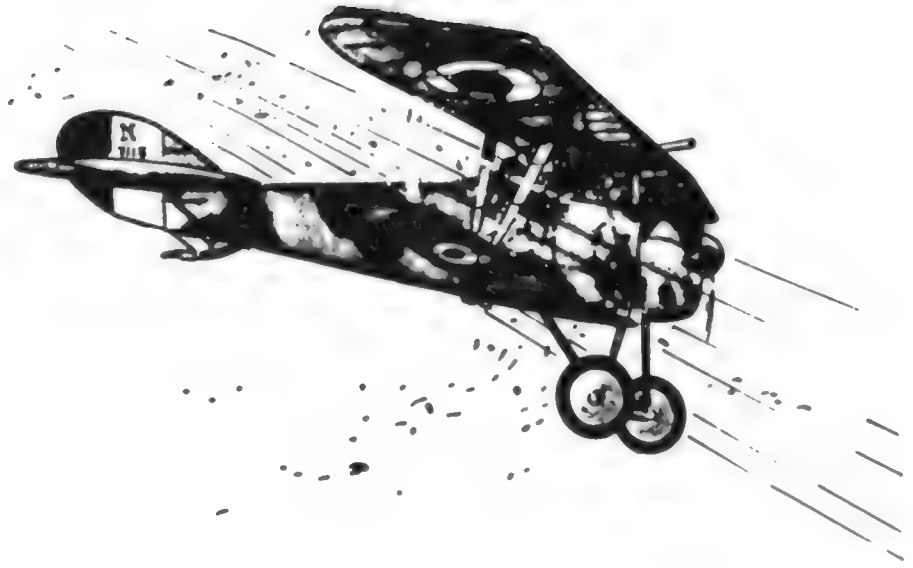
by Gil Kane

By the end of the nineteen-forties, comics had already been through their most creative phase. There was the break away from the style of the newspaper strip when comic books began to find their own identity. And there was the development of individual talents like Will Eisner, Jack Kirby, Jack Cole, Lou Fine, Jerry Siegel, Joe Shuster, Bob Kane and Charlie Biro.

The last important development of the 40's had seen the "realism" of the crime story void the glories of the superhero. The emphasis was on realistic drawing which evolved from the "true" story and focused the artist's attention on naturalistic detail. However, most artists in comics were men without any real academic training and the 30's and 40's were devoted to learning the story-telling techniques of this new form. It wasn't until 1950 that two distinct influences came to bear.

One, Wally Wood, evolved into a rallying point for most of the artists who thought in terms of bravura drawing, while most of the others came under the influence of Alex Toth.

SSSSHEWWOOO
The Albatros dove to escape Bishop's attack ... but the Canadian kept him in range! Down, DOWN ... barely 20 yards apart, his Lewis gun screaming ...
HE'S FLATTENING OUT! NOW ... I'VE ... GOT 'IM!



Toth had started as a Caniff-type artist whose emphasis was on characterization and design. By 1950 he had transcended all of his influences and had become the finest artist that comics ever had.

Toth introduced the techniques of magazine illustration into comic books. His focus was on picture making and its elements, drawing, composition, pattern, tonal values, depth of field and shape. Toth's investigation into stating form and design with utmost economy lifted the craftsmanship level of the entire field. Next to Eisner he was its most important educator.

In this time, when Kirby and the super-hero justifiably dominate comic books, Toth is still producing work of extraordinary perceptiveness. Toth has never had the popular regard of Kirby, Frazetta, or Wood, because the bravura styles of these men are infinitely more appealing to comic book readers than the complex subtleties and abstractions of Toth's style. However, Toth along with Kirby, Eisner and Kurtzman represents an elite of comic book artistry.

It may be a while before the level of understanding on the part of average comics fans rises to a full appreciation of Toth's work, but artists right now are learning from it with envious eyes.

TheAcademy of

Page One Panel One

(The scene opens high upon the mighty Kris T. Bunkers Hydroelectric Damn. There a huge robed being, named Milg Uncle C. Holy cats, gang, i Martha. OOOh, I just know t as food for those s

6... Blueman.. You people stay h the men who started thi Woman.. Alright, Blueman, we'll be here if

Roger; I love you so very m

Helen; Don'a say it, Roger,

Roger; I-it's someone else,

Helen; Yes...it's Dick Milgr

Panel 4

Roger and Helen are both cryi They are in each others arms.

Roger; Then I must leave you

Helen; I will remember you for

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S, PRODUCTION PEOPLE, AND COLORISTS
COMIC ART CONVENTION.

next year

TO THE CONVENTIONEERS...

Even though we know you're throughly in love with this year's convention, we are also aware that you can't bear to wait to become a member of the *1973 Comic Art Convention*. However, you'll just have to wail until December of this year when we begin our advertising campaign for 1973 in various fanzines. We will naturally announce the rates and the convention days at this time. So we advise you to hold tight 'til then tiger!

TO OUR ADVERTISERS...

Anyone who does not advertise in the *1973Comic Art Convention Program Book* will miss a very rare opportunity. The circulation for a program book is usually limited. But, in the next *Comic Art Convention Program Book*, all the advertisements will reach well over the 5,000 people this year's book will reach.

The Rates...

Professional		*Fan*	
Two-page spread...	$100	Two pages...	$60
Single page ad....	60	One page....	40
Half-page ad.....	40	Half page...	25

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The book will be over 200 pages featuring an 8 1/2" by 11" format, perfect binding (book style), which will virtually insure a lifetime of wear and tear. It is sure to be in the hands of over 5000 pros and fans alike. If you intend to advertise anytime in the next year, we feel that you must consider the *1973 Comic Art Convention Program* as an alternative.

All ads must be in our hands by Febru - ary 1st, 1973.

Please make all checks payable to: Phil Seuling.

Ad size: two pages--16" x 10", one page --8" x 10", half page--8" x 5".

Please send all ads to:
The 1973 Comic Art Convention
Paul Levitz
393 East 58th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11203

1973 con

THE CONTENTS...

The first section of next year's pro - gram book will be a massive 40 page report--on this year's New York Comic Art Convention and will be the OFFICIAL report on the con.

The report will be handled by two very capable fan reporters: Joe Brancatelli and Tom Fagan. It will also contain work by the interviewer without peer, John Benson.

It will consist of transcripts from all the speechs and panels that occur at the con this year. It will also feature hundreds of photographs of convention activities shot by the five professional photographers that are on the staff of the convention.

And...

A 100 page story book which will feature work by almost every professional artist/writer in the field (the comic field that is folks!). To name just a few of the very fine folks who will be contributing to this story book:

Ken Barr
Rich Buckler
Bill Dubay
Billy Graham
Gray Morrow

And since we don't want to name-drop ad infinitum, we'll stop there. But our story/art book won't. That's for sure.

The story book, the convention report--and all the ads, of course--will be compiled and edited by none other than the fine---and often very competent---folks from *Phase* magazine--Sal Quartuccio, Jim Ciccolella and Doug Foley.

Convention Chairman
Phil Seuling
621 Ave. Z
B'klyn., N.Y. 11223

Advertising
Paul Levitz
393 E. 58 St.
B'klyn., N.Y. 11203

Convention Report
Joe Brancatelli
2016 E. 23 St.
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Da' Whole Thing
Phasers Assembled
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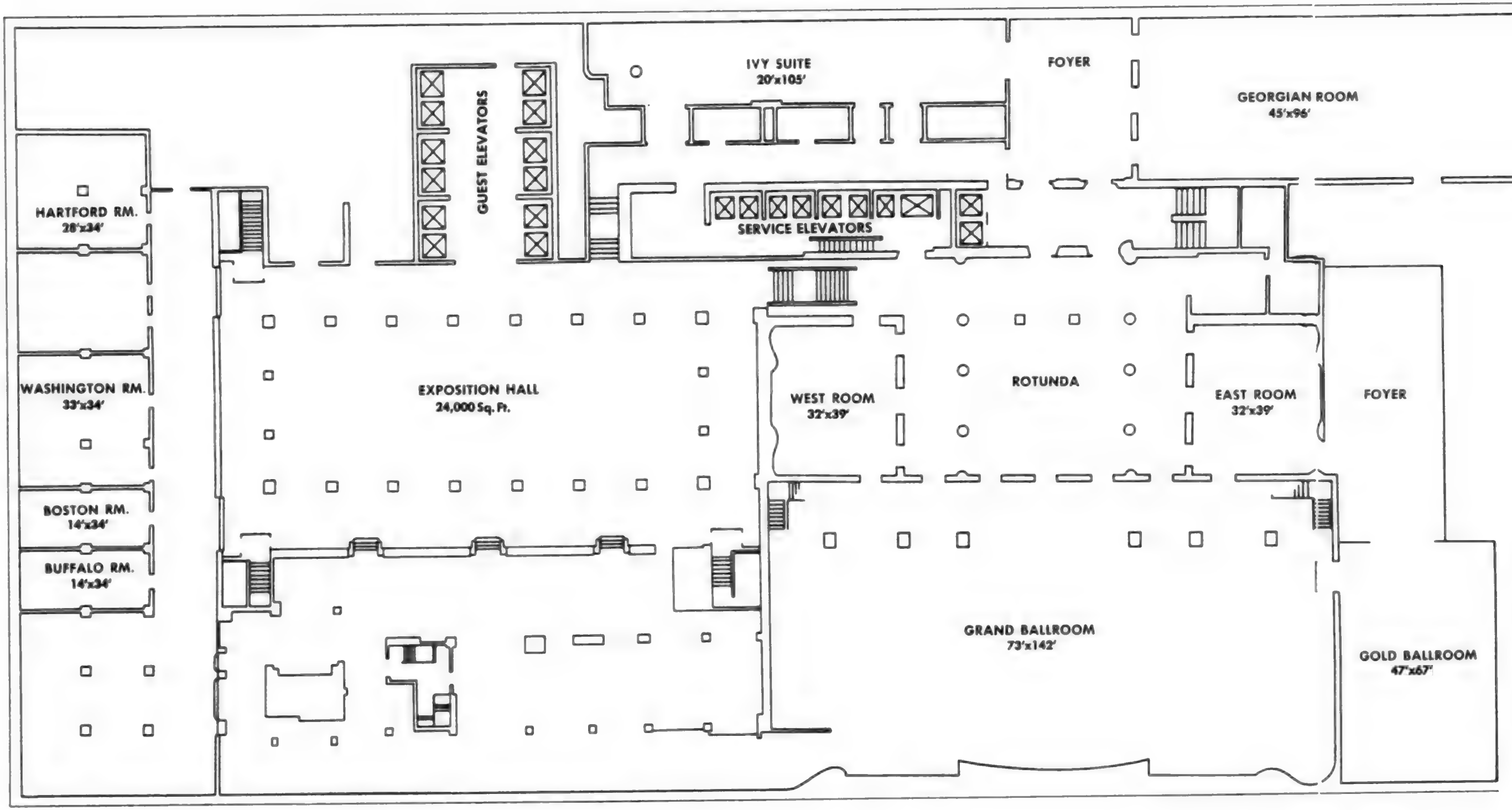
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FOYER
GRAND BALLROOM
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GOLD BALLROOM
47'x67'

Futuristic Fashions '71

CAPTAIN AMERICA

Designer: Kirby

An oldie but a goodie, this style was revived after twenty years in the deep freeze.

ALTRON BOY

Designer: Ju...

Beautiful arrangement; the belt gives a real lift to the whole thing.

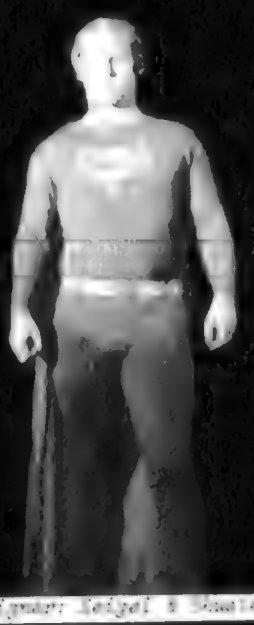
PLASTIC MAN

Designer: Ka...

Sparse, but has advantage of one size fits all.

We liked his cape arrangement but he disappeared into thin air before we could ask him who the designer was.

THE GHOST RIDER



Designer: Kirby

Our photog wouldn't get near this one because he was babbling about being "Ruler of Apokolips." Two men in white came and took him to Happyland.

JARKSEIL

Designer: Kirby

1st Prize 2nd Prize 3rd Prize

BLACK BOLT DEADMAN WILMA DEERING

Designer: Kirby Infantino Nolan & Sinnott

Designer: Keiyel & Sinnott

Phil Seuling was able to get hold of the original color costume worn by George Reeves in the color Superman episodes. Here it is worn by Mike Nolan.

CAPTAIN AMERICA
Bob Miller

ALTRON BOY
Marc Bilgrey

PLASTIC MAN
Bob Weckesser

THE GHOST RIDER
Jerry Sinkovich

JARKSEIL
Martin Pasko

BLACK BOLT
Mike Zeck

DEADMAN
Kurt Golsonk

WILMA DEERING
Heida Saha

THE JUDGES:

Gardner Fox • Jim Steranko • Kirk Alyn

Entries pictured are from the Costume Contest at the 1971 July Comic Art Convention in New York

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Jack Kirby - Bud Sagendorf - Gil Kane
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FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

new york comic art convention

COMPLIMENTS OF A FRIEND & FAN OF THE COMICS

1972 COMICON

BY Billy GRAHAM

ONCE AGAIN, CONVENTION TIME HAS ROLLED AROUND. THIS YEAR WE FIND WITHIN THE CROWD OF THOUSANDS OF LOYAL FANS, ONE LITTLE MILD MANNERED ROVING DUM-DUM...

STATLER HILTON PEN TOP ROOM

COMIC BOOKS

O, WOW! O, MAN! LOOKIT ALL THE STUFF! THE BOOKS! ALL THE COMICS AND ZINES! AND PAINTINGS! O, WOW! O, MAN! *HEY, LOOK!* THERE'S WILLIAMSON! AN' OVER THERE, FRAZETTA! AND ACROSS THERE, WOOD! O, WOW! THERE'S REESE, TODD AND BODE AND JONES AND BUCKLER! O, WOW! THEY'RE ALL STANDING AROUND WARREN, ALL TOGETHER! GIMME A PAD AND PENCIL! *QUICK!*

PAINTINGS

BOOKS

THERE'S GOODWIN!

STAR TREK PHOTOS

THERE'S CUTI!

AWARDS

SALE

THERE'S SMITH!

THERE'S QUARTUCCIO!

THERE'S NIXON!

WHO'S *HE*?

THERE'S WRIGHTSON

SHUT UP AND WATCH THE CON!

THERE'S KELLY

THERE'S McGREGOR!

THERE'S O'NEIL

THERE'S DRUCKER!

WHO? ... WHERE? WHAT? WHAT PIECE OF WOOD? WHO'S GOT GREASE? WHAT BUCKLE? WHATCHA GONNA WRITE ALL THAT DOWN FOR?

THERE'S DE ZUNIGA

THERE'S EISNER

THERE'S SUTTON

MAD

THERE'S GAINES

THERE'S KURTZMAN

THERE'S BARR

THERE'S COCKRAN

THERE'S MORROW

O, BOY! YOU SURE ARE DUMB! WHY, THEY'RE ONLY SOME OF THE TOP PROS IN COMICS! AND THERE'S STERANKO, AN' KANE AN' KUBERT! AN' LOOK OVER THERE! NEAL ADAMS! HE'S JUST ABOUT *THE TOP OF ALL THE PROS!* HOTCHA!

WHAT'S A PRO?

COMICS

COMICS

COMICS

HEY, KID! YOU MEAN YOU *DON'T KNOW* WHO THOSE GUYS ARE? DON'T YOU *READ COMICS?*

I ONLY CAME IN THIS BUILDING TO GO TO THE BOY'S ROOM!

ARTISTS

BLUE CR... CENTER

COMICS

COMICS

NEXT THING I KNEW, I WAS CAUGHT IN A CROWD, PUSHED INTO THE ELEVATOR AND SHOVED OUT ON THIS FLOOR! CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE THE BOY'S ROOM IS? I GOTTA GO *BAD!* HEY! WHERE'D YA *GO*, MAN?

Playboys

Penthouse

Screw

PHASE

AFTER RELIEVING HIMSELF, THEN WANDERING AROUND FOR HOURS, OUR NEW CONVENTION MEMBER HAS BECOME ADDICTED TO THE THOUSANDS OF BOOKS AND TOYS. HE'S LEARNED WHO THE PROS ARE. HE'S MET HUNDREDS OF OTHER FANS AND HE'S BOUGHT MANY OF THE DEALER'S ITEMS. HE'S EVEN PLEDGED HIMSELF TO CO-PUBLISH AND EDIT A FANZINE. HE'S DEDICATED HIMSELF TO ALL CONS FOR THE NEXT *TWENTY FIVE YEARS!!*

LUKE CAGE HERO FOR HIRE
BATMAN
KA-ZAR
RINGO KID
THOR
COMIC READER
DETECTIVES INC.
WEIRD GRAPHIC FANTASY
the WONDERFUL COMIX!
ETCETERA
LAIR OF MADNESS
FANDOM
Tarzan
phase 1
COMIC ART
FANS UNLIMITED
ASTONISHING TALES KA-ZAR DR. DOOM
MARVEL SPOTLIGHT ON... RED WOLF
MARVEL COMICS GROUP RINGO KID
MARVEL SUPER-HEROES FEATURING DAREDEVIL AND IRON MAN
MARVEL COMICS GROUP AVENGERS
MARVEL COMICS GROUP THE INCREDIBLE HULK SPECIAL
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS AND HAPPY HYSTERIA OF THE SPEECHES, THE AWARDS, THE AUCTIONS AND THE TRAPPING OF PROS FOR AUTOGRAPHS AND SKETCHES HAS CHANGED HIM FROM AN UNKNOWING FOUNDLING INTO A KNOWLEDGABLE CRITIC OF COMIC ART...

NOW FROM WITHIN HIS ALTER-EGO EMERGES HE HAS BECOME THE EPITOMY OF HIS FELLOW WORSHIPPERS. ALL THAT HE HAS READ, HEARD AND TOUCHED HAS AFFECTED HIS DESIRES...

WHEN SUDDENLY...

A HOT FLASH BOLT OF COMIC BOOK COLORS STRIKES FROM ABOVE AND WHEN THE UNLETTERED BALLOON OF CLOUDS FADE, WE FIND.... INSTEAD OF A MILD MANNERED ROVING DUM-DUM...

DRAWINGS AND AUTOGRAPHS DO IT!
SCF
SELL IT TO ME!
I BUY EVERY THING!

HE HAS BECOME THE *HERO OF ALL SUPER HEROS!* HE HAS BECOME--

the SUPER-CON FAN!

TO BE CONTINUED... *NEXT YEAR!*

This 1972 Comic Art Convention is dedicated with gratitude (in no very special order) to:

Harold Kinney Dave Kaufman Dick Giordano Cel Symborski Alan Barbour
Richard Bojarski Larry Ivie John Verpoorten Gary Alexander
George Ward Sol Harrison Bob Brosch Dom Sileo Robert Vellez Janet Crea
Mary Lou Jacobs Gray Morrow Neal Adams Dave Weiss Manny Maris
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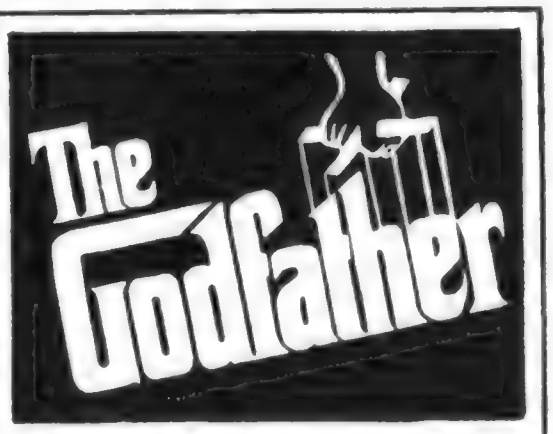
Phil Socci Chris Goldberg Andy Hom Ethan Roberts Kathy Bayley
Janet Newman Jonni Levas Gloria Agnew Anne Scotton Meri Kornstein
Lynne Morrison Doug Foley Jim Ciccolella Sal Quartuccio

MODESTY THY NAME IS LEE

A Bullpen-originated review of "A Marvel-ous Evening with Stan Lee": "a way-out compendium of music, magic and madcap Marvel mayhem! Smilin' Stan himself was . . . reading dynamic dialogue from some of his greatest masterpieces, while famous names . . . gathered to pay homage to Marvel!"

We kick ourselves for missing it.

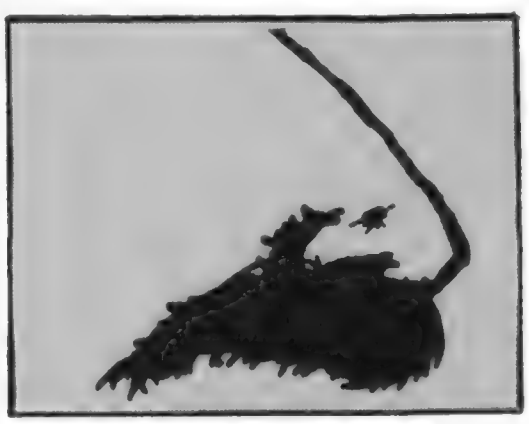


ITALIAN OF THE YEAR

Jerry Grandenetti was mentioned on page 469 of the new paperback edition of "The Godfather." He beats out Frank Sinatra and Frank Frazetta. Ciao!

DO AS I SAY NOT AS I DO

Whatever happened to Al Capp?



YER MUTHA'S MOUSTACHE

No truth to the rumor that Dick Giordano uses his moustache to ink his artwork. He uses his sideburns.

BULL REVIEW OF THE YEAR

To Peter S. Prescott of Newsweek, for his review of "The Comix: A History of Comic Books in America," Oct. 18, 1971: "Most comic strips are pretty dreadful . . . trashy art that chafes at the erectile tissue of our brain stems . . . Tarzan and Prince Valiant were never well-drawn." Sure.

1972 AWARDS FOR DUBIOUS ACHIEVEMENT TO THE COMICS INDUSTRY FROM WARREN PUBLISHING

XEROX AWARD

To Skywald Publishing, whose apings of Creepy & Eerie (Psycho & Nightmare) gave no new meanings whatsoever to the word "imitate."

HANG IN THERE, CHARLIE BROWN

To Charlie Schulz, who's having a tough time making ends meet with his obscure little comic strip. Keep plugging, Charlie.

TALENT SCOUT OF OUR TIME

Harvey Kurtzman is the Ziegfield of comics. He discovered Gilbert Shelton, Jay Lynch, and some sketches of Fritz, a beatnik cat, by someone named "R. Crumb" . . .

HE DON'T LOVE ANIMALS

Idiot of the Year award goes to whomever gave "Fritz the Cat" an X-rating. Robert Crumb only told what all pet owners have known for years: animals are affectionate.

TODAY DC, TOMORROW THE PENTAGON

Archie Goodwin, 5-star writer, now doing DC war books. Next stop: West Point.

WHERE IT'S AT, BABY

Mort Walker, for placing the most realistic black comics character of all, Lt. Fuzz, in Beetle Bailey's platoon.

WHAT'S SO FUNNY ABOUT DAT?

"Best cover we ever ran," said Warren. Which nobody can deny

NO-FANGLES NO-MORE

Don and Maggie Thompson, wh have discontinued their newsletter "Newfangles." Will fandom sur vive?

FOR HE'S A SCAREY GOOD FELLOW

We love Bill Gaines for allowing Nostalgia Press to publish EC reprints, & letting the movies make "Tales From the Crypt."

SEDUCTION OF THE WALLET OR: WERTHAM RIDES AGAIN

A bargain reissue of Frederic Wertham's truth & poetry "Seduction of the Innocent" at $12.50. Send a copy to your congressman. Boo! Hiss! Boo! Hiss!

OMISSION OF THE YEAR

Chelsea House published "The Celebrated Cases of Dick Tracy" and omitted the Sunday color strips. Tough luck, Crimestoppers.

THOU SHALT NOT VIOLATE THE 2nd SABBATH

If God could rest on the 7th day Phil Seuling and his happy hucksters should go to church every Sunday.

BEARD OF THE YEAR

To Tom Sutton. It's bushier than Bill Gaines'.

HOORAY FOR STAN!

Kubrick, that is. A special award to you from us Comics Fans, since the Academy of Motion Pictures doesn't know you exist.

Will Eisner

WE ALL LOVE YOU

. . . for this and every other year.

OH WELL! BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

Casper the Friendly Ghost was chosen as a mascot for the Apollo 16 space flight. While on the moon an astronaut fouled up experimental equipment that cost the taxpayers $1 million. Boy, that buys one helluva lot of comic books!

HEY WALT, YOU OWE US ROYALTIES!

When you visit Disney World in Florida take a look in their House of Horrors. If that isn't Uncle Creepy inside, we'll eat our ears.

DON'T SLEEP IN THE SUBWAYS DARLING

Neal Adams had his portfolio stolen while snoozing on a subway. Warren's artists always sleep in taxis.

Photo by Jim Ruth

IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR

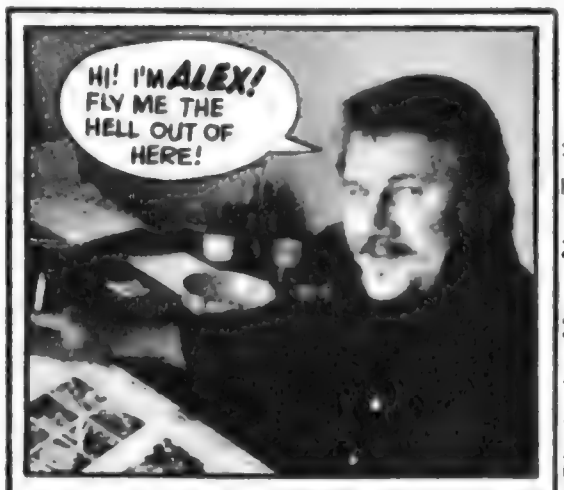
But not for Marvel Comics. Uncle Sam proved to be stronger than Iron Man, The Hulk, Spiderman & Millie the Model all put together. Shame, shame, tsk, tsk.

WHAT'S A NICE GIRL LIKE YOU DOING WITH HOBBY KITS LIKE THIS?

Poor little Vampirella was taken off the market along with Aurora's torture kits. Shame, shame, tsk, tsk.

DRAW ME—WIN A FREE ART SCHOLARSHIP

We're looking for people who like to draw Roy Thomas. Guess how many times Roy's face has been drawn into Marvel stories, & win a free interview with the government's Price Stabilization Board.



NEWS HEADLINE: JULY 6, 1972

Hanna-Barbera animator Alex Toth, on his flight back to California after giving the 1972 ComiCon keynote address, is hijacked and flown to Disney World by eccentric billionaire duck.

Photo by Mrs. Alex Toth

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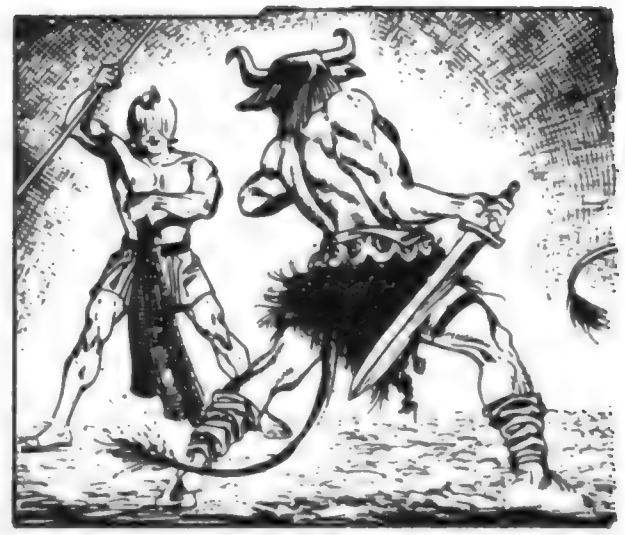

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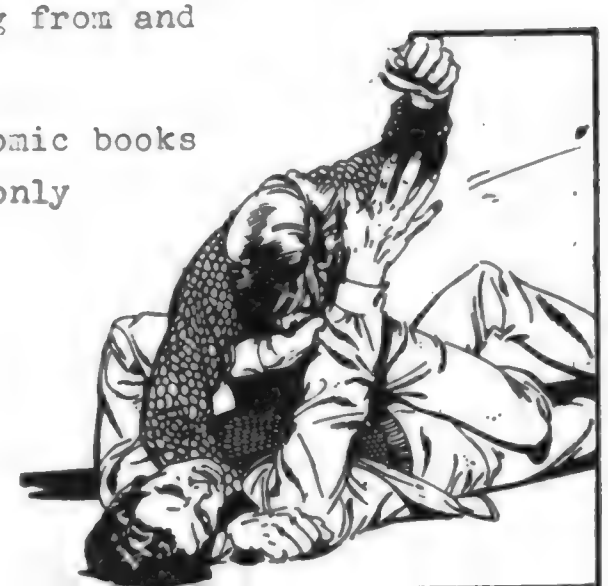

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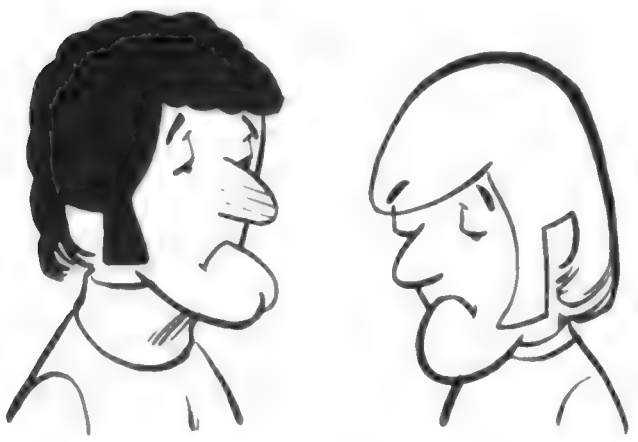

WHEN ARTIST-FRIENDS CAME AROUND IT ***HURT*** TO TELL THEM THEIR WORK JUST WASN'T GOOD ENUF' FOR OUR PUBLICATION!

THE BOSS RATIONALIZED AND TOLD ME THAT TOOK GUTS, AND CHALKED IT UP TO GIVING US A HIGHER QUALITY PUBLICATION!

THEN I DISCOVERED THAT ***MY OWN*** WORK WASN'T GOOD ENUF' FOR OUR PUBLICATION!

THE BOSS RATIONALIZED AND SAID SOMETHING ABOUT THE QUALITY of OUR PUBLICATION BEING THE ***ULTIMATE*** HIGH!

NOW A NEW GUY JUST WALKED IN, AND I'M FACED WITH THE TOUGHEST DECISION I'VE HAD AS ART DIRECTOR....

...HOW DO I TELL ***GOO*** HE'S NOT GOOD ENUF TO WORK FOR US?

dube

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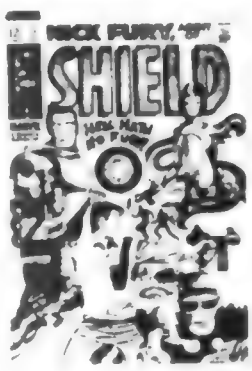

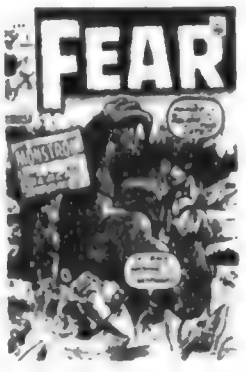

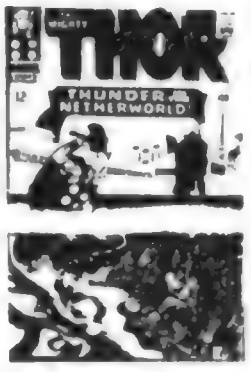

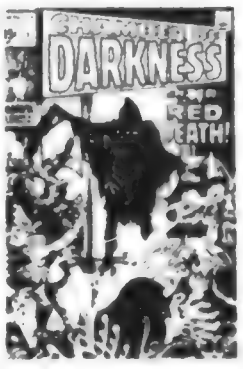

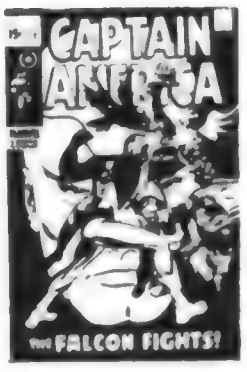

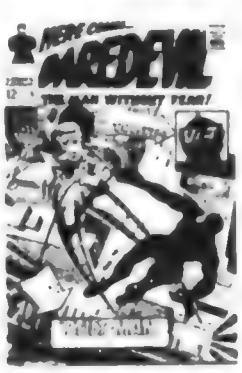

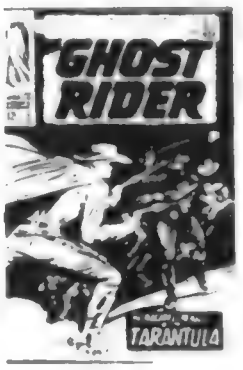

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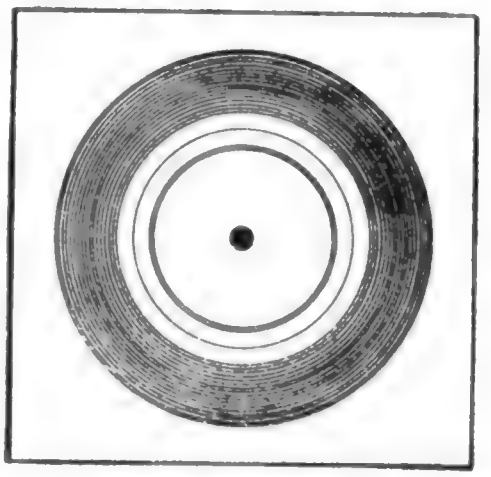

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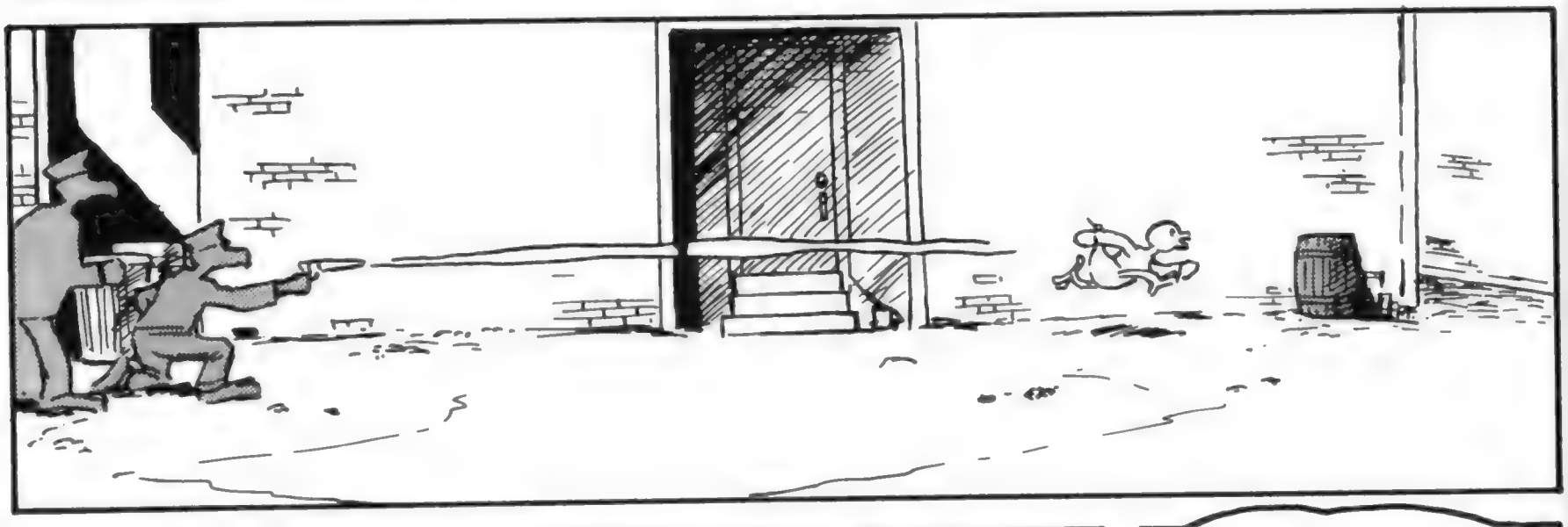

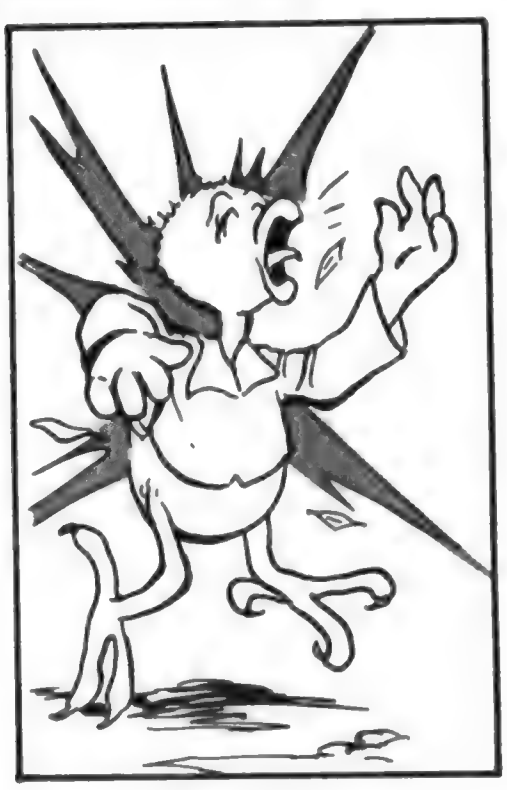

THAT FINISHED THE BASTARD!
@%&!. freak..

GEEZE! LOOK AT THAT FACE, WILL YA, HARRY!
..damn creep..

I'LL GET THE VAN!

PAT
63
E
39

Y'KNOW, HARRY, I COULDN'T LIVE IF I LOOKED LIKE THAT!
PATROL
239

YEAH! HE SURE IS A WEIRD-O, AIN'T HE!
END

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TONY
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Jim Steranko & Gardner Fox

at the

1971 Comic Art Convention

Luncheon - July, 1971

JOHN BENSON: I'm very happy to be here with Jim Steranko today, because (even though he hasn't done so much in the last year or so) his work, more than anything else now in the comics field represents what comics should be. There are many fine professionals, but Jim is the most individual creator in comics now. Jim, what did you do before you went into the comics field? I know that you worked in magic – was this a sideline, or were you a professional?

JIM STERANKO: Magic was a kind of a hobby to me. I've worked in bars as a close-up magician behind the bar and table to table. I wrote a number of books on magic. Most of them will be republished by Supergraphics, in the next year perhaps. Maybe from the time I was 17 I supplemented my income by playing with almost every band within fifty miles of my home town. I played every instrument, but primarily guitar. As a livelihood, I've done nothing but artwork in one form or another. Finally, at the time I got into comics, I was an art director for a small advertising agency.

BENSON: I believe that you've done work in comics lately just because you like the field; you have sources of income other than comics. Is there a relationship between that and the fact that you're doing things in comics that probably otherwise aren't being done in comics today?

STERANKO: I think there is a correlation between those things, John. For example, when I worked as an art director in the ad agency, I was doing many different kinds of artwork: machinery by air-brush, composition, typography and so forth. I've said this many times – I do not consider myself an artist. When I think about people who are really artists, I think of Reed Crandall and Neal Adams, and maybe a half dozen other people in comics who draw amazingly well. If I had to categorize myself, I would probably say that I belong in the class of the storyteller.

But applying things like typography and design . . . I was a photographer for awhile; I use photography and op art gimmicks in my comics. Everything from films, from radio, pulps, business, everything I could possibly apply from my background, including the magic I've done, the gigs I've played – everything goes into every comic story. Nick Fury became Steranko. I gave him my background, I said, "Here, this is what you are." So perhaps every area that I am interested in will perhaps eventually show up in my stories.

BENSON: I've heard that *Mr. Miracle* was based on your magic books.

STERANKO: Yes, as a matter of fact, that is true. I remember back when I first met Jack Kirby, I gave him one of my books, *Steranko's World of Escape*, in which I explained how to get out of jail cells and packing boxes at the bottom of the river and so on. And soon afterwards he did a SHIELD story in *Strange Tales* about a jail break. Of course, it was all fair because there was nothing of Steranko there, but yet it inspired him to do that. And then some years later, oh, about a year and a half ago, I met Jack in New York; he had moved out to the coast and come back for a visit. We had dinner, and Jack said this to me, "Kid, you don't know what you've got." "What do you mean, Jack?" "No, no, I'll tell you later – you don't know what you've got." "Well, OK." I didn't know what he was talking about. He elaborated a little bit – what he was saying was that there was something that I knew about that I hadn't exploited or used to my best possible advantage. About a year later *Mr. Miracle* came out, and *Mr. Miracle* was based on that book *Steranko's World of Escape*. So I suppose by rights you could say that I was Mr. Miracle, which completes a very strange cycle of boy growing up being interested in comic books, getting into the business as an artist and writer and suddenly finding a book on the newsstand roughly based on his exploits – or evidence of my misspent youth, as I prefer to call it.

BENSON: In your *History of Comics* there's evidence that you contacted or knew personally some of the old pulp writers. How did you get to know them? Do you have any anecdotes to tell?

STERANKO: Of course I have many anecdotes, but I don't think any of them could be told in public. There's a man I refer to in that

book who has written *The Shadow*, who has written many books on magic, who has been an idol of mine for years and years. He was the editor of *Dude* and *Gent* when they were competing with *Playboy*. He's an editor now. His name is Bruce Elliott, and he's like my father here in New York City, and he's always there to give advice, to turn me on to the right people, and so forth. Bruce worked for the pulps. He worked for the comics. He wrote things like *Red Dragon Comics*; he wrote Nick Carter and so forth. But he wrote many many pulp stories, and a number of *Shadow* stories in the late forties, when the

books for every company, I believe, except perhaps for Timely. He wrote crime stories for Charles Biro and many other things.

Anyway, Walter Gibson is sort of Bruce Elliott's father, he sort of took care of *him*. So if you really want to put the puzzle together, you might call me the son of the son of the Shadow. Who knows? [laughter].

BENSON: What was the starting point of the structure of your book? Did the outline come first, or did your research dictate the outline?

Shadow was a detective. Through Bruce I met Walter Brown Gibson, who, as most of you know, is the author of *The Shadow*, which he wrote under the pen name of Maxwell Grant. The last time I saw Walter was about five months ago. He's in his seventies. He's an amazing man; he's very prolific. He was writing as much as 20,000 words a day sometimes, which was incredible. He was knocking out a complete 60,000 word novel every other week, and they were good novels, they were creative. Although all pulp work was rather formalized, as Gardner Fox will probably tell you later. Gibson was amazingly inventive. And besides *The Shadow*, he wrote things like *Roreo the Magician*. He wrote *The Shadow Comics*. He wrote all the *Blackstone*

STERANKO: Well, the story of the *History of Comics* is rather complex. If you'd like to hear it, I'll tell it to you; it takes a few minutes. I drive from Pennsylvania to New York, and after you've made the trip about 300 times it gets tiring. So in order to amuse myself and not fall asleep on the road, which I'm prone to do, I'd play little head games. And about that time I thought that perhaps it would be a good idea if I spent the three hours on the trip to New York thinking of an idea that might earn me $100 or $200. If I could think of one idea like that, it might be worth the trip. And I conceived the idea of doing a book about the history of comics as a Marvel Summer one-shot. Marvel was hung up about what to reprint in the Summer – they

were reprinting blocks of stories and so forth. And I thought, wouldn't it be great to do twenty pages of comic history in one of those books. I began elaborating on the idea, and by the time I got to New York it was going to be a Magazine Management 75-cent slick book, like *True Romances*, if you can call that a slick book. I presented the idea to Stan, and he was kind of cool about it. Of course, I had nothing to show him – no presentation. One interesting sidelight is that perhaps a year earlier, maybe in 1968, I had taken a presentation, with illustrations and a typed outline, called something like *How to Write and Draw for the Comics* to my agent, Henry Morrison. I was going to include a gallery of comic art, and I think I was going to reprint some comics, if I recall.

So I went home, worked on the idea and presented it to Stan again, and this time I said, "I will write the book and call it *Stan Lee's History of Comics*." I knew I wasn't getting through to him earlier, so I changed my approach. I said, "This book will be so good, you can't afford not to be able to put your name on it." You know, this is taking nothing away from Stan. What I was saying was, "I'll give you X% on this book," because the name Stan Lee is magic – whatever you put his name on would sell well. Anyway, I collected many fanzines; I rooted through my comic collection. Originally I had intended sixty chapters in the book. That book was to be 64 pages, 8½ x 11 size. I talked to a friend of mine. I gave him the complete format of the book, the little playing-card-sized reproductions, and so forth. I told him the sort of facts I wanted him to collect. I gave him all the fanzines, and he wrote an outline based on those fanzine articles. Full of misinformation – simply awful. I took that outline, and by talking to the people I had met in the industry, the people I had worked with, the people I knew, the people I never knew but admired and wanted to talk to, compiled a manuscript of originally about 300 pages. The entire book was written in longhand. Putting together the book, collecting the facts and verifying them was quite a task.

The second volume was even tougher because I was dealing not just with the two top companies, National and Marvel, where many of the people still remain – they remember who worked there and so forth. The facts are not that difficult to collect. But try finding out backgrounds for companies that have been defunct for 25 years; Hillman, Fiction House, Farrell, Ajax, St. John, Quality, Fawcett. Volume Two was very difficult to put together, and it will be much bigger than Volume One, of course. There will be over 400 illustrations in it, and maybe you'll get a kick out of it.

BENSON: Tell us about your publishing company, Supergraphics.

STERANKO: Working, as I have, not only in comics, but in the many things that I'm involved in, I thought that it would be perhaps wise to stop working for other people and maybe do a little for myself. I think I've made a lot of money for a lot of people over the years, and I really have almost nothing to show for it, in my bank account. So I decided to take a publishing venture myself – Supergraphics. We'll publish all comics-related material. I have a man working right now who will be doing a series of film books; I guarantee you they'll be the most exciting film books you've seen in a long time. I bought the copyright back on all of my magic books, and I'll be republishing them, which is divorced from comics material, but I think comic fans will enjoy them. I have several other rather far off projects in the works that I can't tell you about right now. Of course, I'm working on *The Magazine of Comic Art*, which will be a full color magazine full of comics-related material. *Talon*, the sword and sorcery character I created, which will be *Life* magazine size, full color wraparound cover. A book called *How to Write and Draw for the Comics*, and one *History of Comics* each year – there'll be about four altogether. Volume Two will be out soon – *The Return of the History of Comics* [laughter]. Next year, *Son of the History of Comics* [laughter]. The following year, *The revenge* . . . [laughter and applause].

PHIL SEULING: Every sports writer who hits Chicago comes away with stories about one man, Ernie Banks. He's played baseball a good long time, twenty years. He's hit 500 home runs. And he has this attitude, "Holy

Smokes – we get *paid* for doing this!" Sitting with me is the Ernie Banks of comic books, Gardner Fox, who has used just those words himself. He's taken such a joy in what he does so well. How many words do you think you've written so far?

GARDNER FOX: Fifty million words would be close.

SEULING: Fifty million words and you're still enjoying it? Tell me, what are your sources?

FOX: Well, the first source comes from inside my head, obviously. Actually, I maintain two file cabinets chock full of stuff. And the attic is crammed with books and magazines, and I have all these life sciences nature books and that kind of thing. The only thing I don't have at my fingertips are the travel books. But everything about science, nature, or unusual facts, I can go to my files or the at least 2,000 books that I have, and I can dig it out. One rule we have in the house is that nobody touches my books, not even my grandchildren. Because I know just about where every one is – up in the attic, in a corner – that's where it is, so they stay that way.

SEULING: Is that a fairly accurate description of your mind? Are you a treasure trove of facts and trivia?

FOX: I go in for trivia, yes. Because you never know when some little fact could be put to good use in a comic book or in a novel, to add something a little extra to the flavor and the atmosphere.

SEULING: What subjects are you drawn to? What are your favorite fields of interest?

FOX: Well, of course, I am a lawyer. I haven't practiced law in 33 years, but I was a lawyer before I became a comic book writer. But I'm interested in knowledge really, if only for the sake of knowledge. My only problem is that when I look up things I get so engrossed in reading that I have to say, "Let's get back to work – we're not making any money this way."

For instance, I remember one book I wrote called *The Swordsman*. I had to get a map of the city of Cairo in the year 1350. Well, this is a little difficult to get. But I managed to track one down in the Mt. Vernon Library, and . . . librarians used to hate to see me come in [laughter]. If I couldn't find something in their library, and I knew it pretty well, they didn't have much chance either. I remember one problem was the word "bursatrix." I thought I knew what it meant – it's a medieval term for a woman of the household that carries the spending money around in her purse – but before I used it in a book I wanted to be sure. They had Anglo-Saxon dictionaries, all kinds of dictionaries there, and I couldn't find it, so finally I went to the reference librarian. Well,

they spent about three weeks looking up that word and they couldn't find it either. Every time I came near that records desk, they'd start to groan. Knowledge is kind of a hobby with me.

I like sports and all the rest. I like the Mets and the Jets. I have season tickets to the St. John's games that I drag my wife to occasionally. And I'm not rich, but I get a lot of fun out of life.

SEULING: I think you *provide* a lot of fun in life. What do you read for your own amusement? Do you have your own escape reading?

FOX: I have two writers that I reread and reread. One that I'm sure nobody's every heard of is Jeffery Pond. I have every book he ever wrote. The other is the mystery writer John Dickson Carr, whose style I admire tremendously. I think he's absolutely fantastic. And of course the old standbys – Merritt I always particularly liked – and Burroughs. I can still remember the time I read my first Edgar Rice Burroughs on a brownstone stoop in Brooklyn. I think I was 11 years old. It was my birthday and I had gotten *The Gods of Mars* and *The Warlord of Mars*. And this opened up a complete new world to me. Later on, I saved up my money and bought a dozen of them. Of course, when I was 11 years old there were no comics. I read all of Burroughs, Harold Lamb, Talbut Mundy. And most of all those I have at home in my library. And when I get nostalgic, I'll pick up one of them and read it and enjoy it.

SEULING: Now that you have the perspective of time, have you ever regretted any direction that the field has not taken? Something it could have done more fully?

FOX: That's a very tough question, because, first of all, as a creative person, I never set any business standards for any of the outfits I worked for, naturally. And where creativity, the way that *you* want to write a story, comes into conflict with the, I'll say 'sales department' for want of a better term, creativity will *always* take a back seat to sales. I don't care what it is. I know the paperback outfits that I write for – their every move is dictated by the sales department. "Such-and-such is selling – write that!" And the comic book publishers are guided by that same principle. Now in my own personal experience, I still love the character called Adam Strange [applause]. I enjoy writing Adam Strange tremendously, but, as I say, the almighty dollar said it wasn't selling as well as other things at that time. They made a changeover and gave Julie Schwartz and me *Batman* to write, as you probably know. This is an unfortunate part of our world, but it happens to be true that a lot of times what you would like to write, the way you would like to handle a story – it cannot be done that way because of certain, let's call them editorial policies. They have to, or they feel they have to, produce things in a certain way. So, I feel that *if* the publishers will change their viewpoints on a lot of things, then you may get some new directions. But offhand, I wouldn't want to say what new directions they would be without actually sitting down and giving that a good couple of hours thinking. But the commercial end of it always has to be considered.

SEULING: If you were to meet that guardian angel with millions of dollars in his

pocket who said you could write anything you want, what would you be doing?

FOX: I guess I'd take a trip somewhere [laughs]. I enjoy writing fantasy, sword and sorcery, any kind of story that's really entertaining. If I had a million dollars, I'll tell you right now I don't think my life'd change. All it would mean to me would be security, that if they didn't like that novel or story, I could still eat. And I enjoy eating.

SEULING: You've given others so much pleasure over the years. What have been the rewards to you?

FOX: Of course, this dinner is reward enough, you know that. I guess there are two rewards. One is the self satisfaction you get from turning out a story that you think is good. Now, I'm not on an ego trip. By that I mean, you do the best you can, but in nine out of ten stories that I write I have a little nagging doubt inside me that this could have been better. That's something I think any creative person will experience. Of course, when you're confronted with deadlines, you don't have too much time to put it away for a month and then bring it out. There's an artist waiting – he has to eat too, you know.

Of course, the other reward is that you fans say you enjoy this, you remember that. It's a lot of fun to bring pleasure to people. I'm sure that Burroughs and these other writers, while they wrote for money, no question about it, there's a certain amount of good feeling to know that someone will like it – that does a lot to me.

SEULING: May I express my appreciation of your last fifty million words, second only to my anticipation of your next fifty million [applause].

FOX: I'll tell you, sometimes I feel like 175 years old; other times I feel like twenty, that I still have a lot of my best writing ahead of me, so maybe I'll get some of those fifty million words written.

SEULING: We can have some questions from the floor now.

QUESTION: *To Jim Steranko. I understand some people started a book about Kirby, but that they've given it over to you. Is that true?*

STERANKO: No, they didn't give it to me – I bought them out. I think everybody knows pretty well my own feelings about Jack Kirby's proceedings over the last thirty some odd years. And I felt that if there was going to be a definitive book about Kirby, I would like to see it done with quality, with taste. So I bought out the people in Detroit who were preparing the book, although I'm sure they would have done it well. I decided to do that undertaking myself, and we're putting together that Jack Kirby book. It's not a portfolio – that's something else – although it *will* feature many of Jack's works. It'll be a complete checklist of everything he's ever done [applause]. It will feature a list of what I call "Kirby classics," a biography, and an analysis of his work.

QUESTION: *Mr. Fox, do you think relevancy in comics is a passing trend?*

FOX: I think you'll always have relevancy, there's no question about that. Now, I've written a comic book story on pollution. I've written a novel on pollution. How long can you push it? It's like women's fashions – they change. Relevancy is always at issue in a comic, and should be. Now, when I first started in comics, there was nothing except bank robbers; Bonnie and Clyde were the big thing in those days. And I can still remember Joe Shuster when he came in with his *Superman* comics (because I started in comics

about two or three months before *Superman* came out). People weren't interested in the environment in those days. You know, the air was there to breathe, and the water was there to drink, as a chaser after hard liquor or something [laughter]. So the interest has come only recently, and if I can pay a compliment to the young people here, I think that it's the young people who have brought it about. Your generation is concerned with these things, and I think it's marvelous. But you can't always write a story about pollution; it would tend to get a little tiring.

But always in the back of my head is the entertainment side. I don't care what you write about – drugs, or white slavery, or anything under the sun – as long as you make the story interesting. I don't believe that a comic book is the place to preach. I think stands should be taken, no question, but I still maintain that the story value, the entertainment, is the big thing.

QUESTION: *How can one break into comics writing, or comics illustration?*

FOX: I'll make this a truthful answer. If I were a young writer today, I would write for anything but comics. Comic writing has treated *me* very well, but those were different times – comics were new, they were booming. From what I hear at the ACBA meetings about sales reports, they're not doing too well now. If I were a young lad, I'd write for television; because we're always going to have television.

However, if you're really a nut about this thing, you'd do what all the writers say to do – you'd study the way the script goes, think in terms of dramatics. Essentially a story should be entertaining. It should lift you out of the fact that you're sitting on a brownstone stoop, as I was when I read *The Gods of Mars* for the first time. Or the subway; the subway should disappear, and you're living in the world of the story. That is the ideal of a story. Now, how to do this troubles *me*, and I've been writing for 33 or 34 years. Concentrate on telling the story the best way you can – what is the most interesting way, what is your approach, your viewpoint.

If you're writing a costume story, you're held back just a little. When I'm writing a Justice Society or a Justice League . . . particularly a Justice League, because you only had 32 pages, and you had something like six or seven characters and you had to characterize and have a bit of action for each one, and an introduction. It was rough to get all that in there. There's a self discipline involved, too.

As far as the mechanics go, you approach the editor of the magazine and say, "Look, I'd like to write a comics story, and here's a plot synopsis." Make the synopsis interesting. I know when I sent plots in to Archie Goodwin when he was editor, he used to say, "Great; just break it down into panels, pages, and so on." You're selling your story and you have to put it in the most appealing way that you know how. And if you can be like O'Henry and have a surprise ending, I'm sure you'll sell the story.

STERANKO: I believe there's room for new artists. I think in the last year or so there have been many new artists breaking into the field – they're sort of third generation comic artists. I think I'm probably a second generation comic artist. I read the original comics of the forties, and they inspired me and shaped my life. And of course Gardner Fox was one of those people that was responsible.

FOX: It's all my fault.

STERANKO: Something like that, yeah. But I think there's always room. After I got out of school – I was 17 – I worked for a commercial artist who told me something I'll never forget, in reference to getting highly competitive jobs, which comics is, and also paperback covers – incredibly competitive. He said, "Make sure that your work is so goddam good that when you go to a company, they can't afford not to hire you; they can't afford to let the competition get you." If you are that good, if you work, you practice, you think out what you are doing, and you get to that point, you will work in comics, believe me. You will do almost anything you want to do.

QUESTION: *Mr. Steranko, you said Mr. Miracle is based on your book. But less than half of the book is about escape. The rest is about how to use the mother box. How do you explain this?* [Laughter, applause].

STERANKO: Kirby handles his mother boxes his way. I handle them my way. [Laughter, applause].

Transcribed and edited for publication by John Benson.

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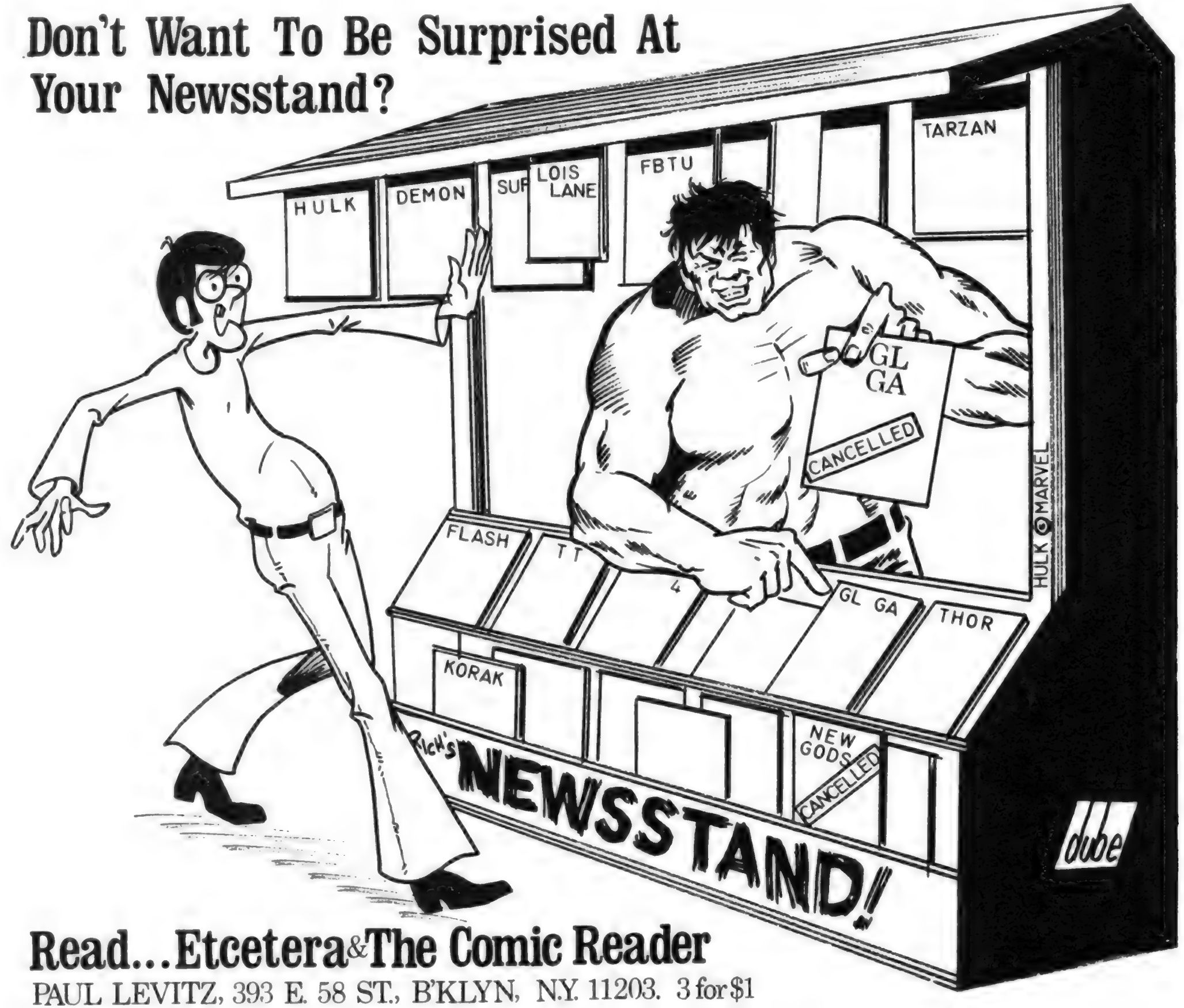

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FIVE FUN-FILLED FOURTHS

by Tom Fagan

When the Establishment types ruled fireworks taboo . . . I felt the Fourth of July to be robbed of its red, white and blue.

To me the defusing of the Fourth was the ultimate fizzle. Gone was one of my favorite holidays. Picnics and parades paled in comparison alongside memories of a day once blessed by the rocket's red glare and the sounds of cherry bombs bursting in mid-air.

The Fourth? Just another ho-hum day in July!

That was then but this is now. Happily, the Fourth of July has been returned to us, as exciting as ever, yet this time done up in four-color splendor!

What's more American than comics? For a spirited 76 years they've been with us in strip and book form providing, as The Yellow Kid sagely said, "A rainbow of colors . . . A wild bust of laffter!" Comics . . . more American than even apple pie!

And now when I think of The Fourth, I automatically think of comics. And if you're reading this, why then, you think the way I do. For the Fourth of July has become the time of the:

NEW YORK COMIC ART CONVENTION

It's been that way five years now. Sure there'd been "ComiCons" before. Since 1964 in fact, first starting in New York and gradually branching out elsewhere until you can attend any number of them today. Still the New York Con is considered "the granddaddy of them all" . . . the yearly mecca!

And it was the New York Con that made "ComiCon" synonomous with July and the Fourth.

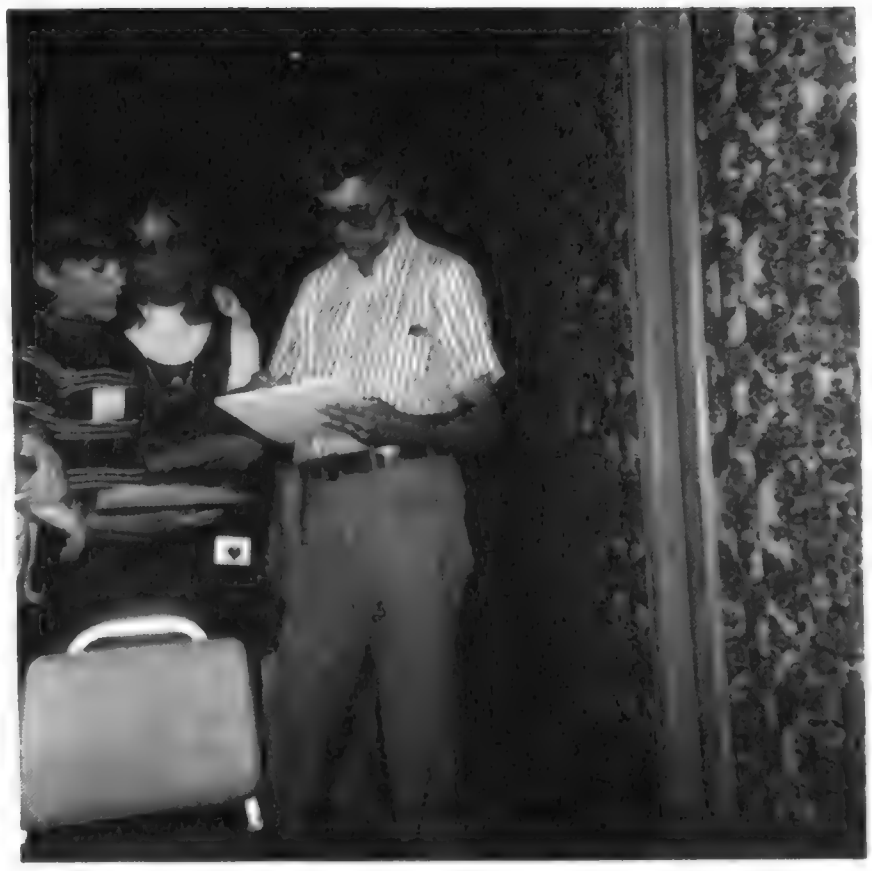
One thinks back to the first of the New York Cons. The year was 1968 . . . the place the Statler-Hilton – the Con site ever since.

Those attending that year couldn't help thinking, man, Cons sure have come a long ways. From the '64 gathering in an upstairs loft, to a sleazy Greenwich Village hotel, to better quarters uptown . . . and now this!

The Con had class. It had luster; it had magic . . . from the moment of its beginning to the minute of its end. Despite the lack of promised help from a few, we experienced a Con the like of which was a wild, sweet ride into the Fourths to come.

One recalls the excitement of registering . . . the music of Little Orphan Annie and Batman theme songs, happily sounding in the ear. Dealer tables heaped with golden age treasures of comic art past, present and yet-to-come.

Meeting the pros. Hearing them discuss their works and views, and if you were lucky, having them do a souvenir sketch for you.



Television coverage and writeups in major Manhattan newspapers.

Movie showings. Auctions . . . by Cthulhu if you'd only bid a dollar higher that package with Batman 13 in it would now be yours! But you did manage to snag a fondly-remembered Big Little Book, "Og. . .Son of Fire!" A consolation of sorts.

Buying original art and making away in triumph with beautiful panels from Deadman. A cocktail party for pros only. The presentation of Comic Art "Fan Awards." A costume parade with Joe Orlando drawing a picture of the winner, a lad in a Captain Marvel Jr. uniform.

Inscribed plaques given *Will Eisner* and *Burne Hogarth* at the luncheon banquet. The speeches of these two Comic Art greats that followed. The closing "rap session" where we traded ideas for "next year's Con" . . . Future dates definitely decided as "Fourth of July days".

A fine time in '69. A scale even grander than before. *Hal Foster*, the luncheon guest of honor; the Red Skull appearing in the costume lineup amidst a thunderous salvo of "Seig Heils"; a coveted run of "Rivets" strips at walk-away prices during an auction; planning the Con for '70.

Now the turn of *Bill Everett* and *Joe Kubert* to receive public acclaim and recognition. Tom Watkins, the 1970 costume winner . . . who will ever forget him as Solomon Grundy? The "Warren Awards" . . . another Con "first". Steranko hawking his newly published "History of Comics", Volume One in a Series of Four. Martin Greim winning "amateur" art award honors. The farewells with promises to meet again next year.

Fun in '71. *Jim Steranko* and *Gardner Fox* filling the luncheon guest roles. Again the *Warren Awards* this time with an added fillip . . . a surprised *Seuling* accorded a richly deserved recognition trophy.

ACBA and Goete announcements. Pro panel discussions, fanzine editors talks. *John Benson's* "Spirit Slide Show". *Harvey Kurtzman*, guest lecturer. Black Bolt, Deadman and Wilma Deering winning in the costume parade.

Bill Gains and *Marie Severin* on the E.C. panel. A Yellow Kid page bought at auction.

Kirk Alyn reminiscing on what it's like to be Superman. Good vibrations, all for an audience of two thousand.

Now the *Fifth Anniversary* celebration. Five full days to match the occasion. **The 1972 Comic Art Convention.** Hallowe'en, Christmas and The Fourth all rolled into one tinseled package just waiting for the opening.

To quote Phil Seuling:

"The Comic Art Convention is a place to have fun! So, go ahead. Groove! Have fun!"

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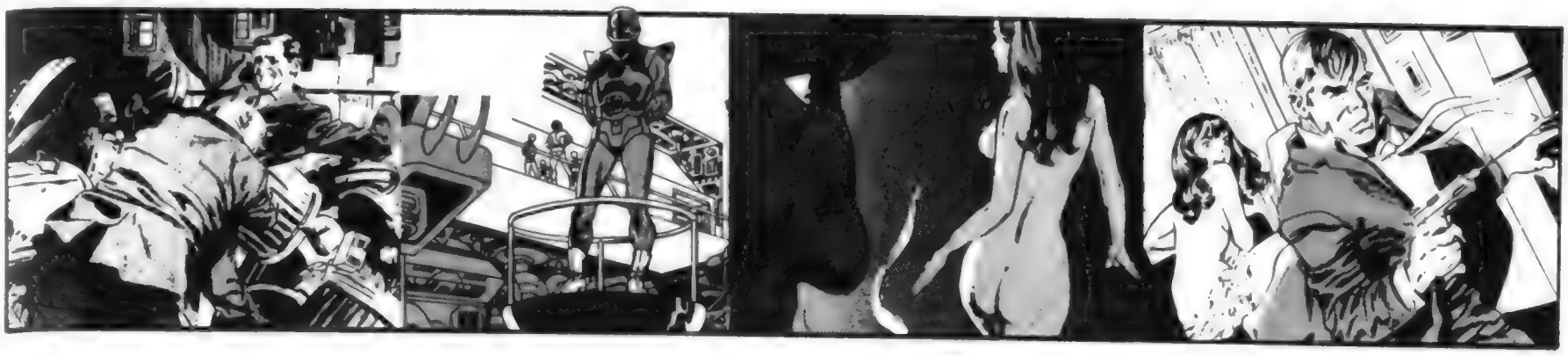

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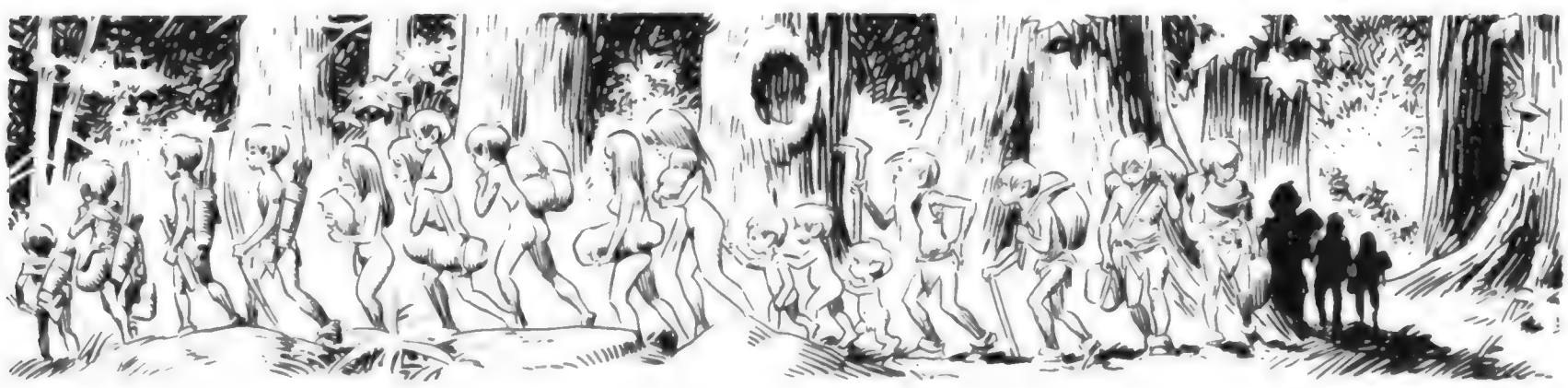

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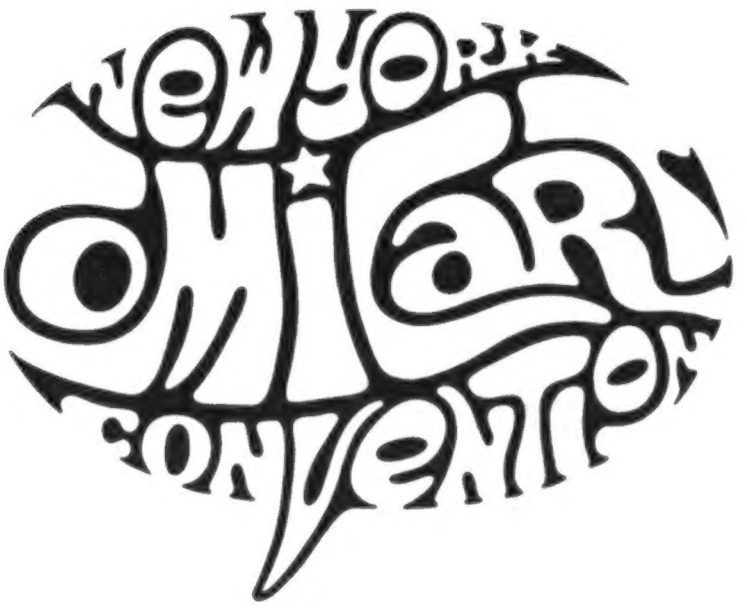

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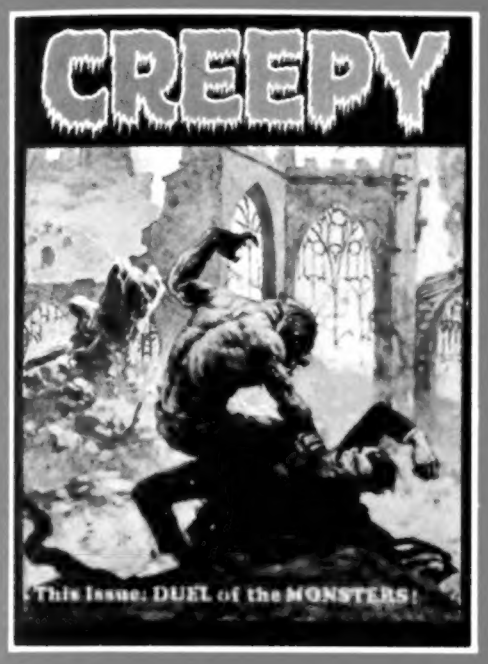

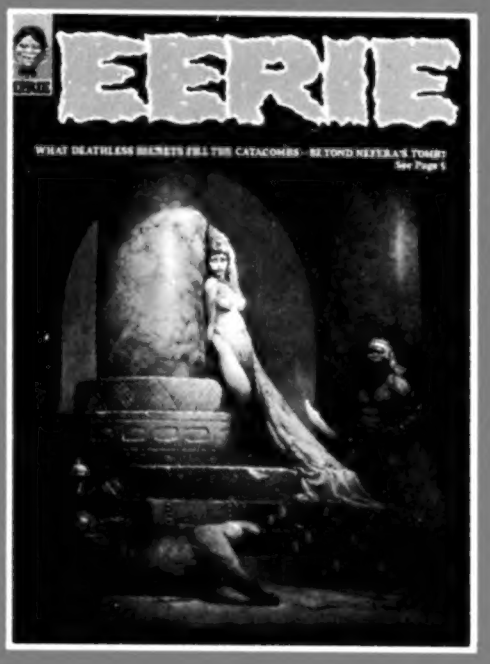

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